



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE



Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

J-Line Residents Ready to Rumble Over Breda Cars

By Joe Franklin

It has been 15 months since Noe Valley residents living along the J-line were first awakened in the middle of the night by that earth-pounding, anti-human scream known as Muni's new and improved streetcar, the Breda.

Since then Muni engineers say they have reduced the screeching — which is actually a "pure-tone, low-frequency noise" caused by the car's AC propulsion system vibrating against other parts of the car — by nine decibels. But the rumbling of the Breda cars, which are five tons heavier than their predecessors, has persisted, causing cracks in the foundations of houses and a smattering of lawsuits.

Thus far, more than 40 claims, ranging from serious structural damage to public nuisance, have been filed. The city's policy is to review the claims, usually within about three months, and make a ruling to either pay the claim or deny it. If denied, which happens in about 80 percent of the

Star Magic Closes on 24th St.

By Denise Minor

Gone are the crystals, telescopes, magic wands, and pewter wizards.

Star Magic, the unique store that catered to amateur astronomers and astrologers alike, closed its doors on Feb. 13 after nearly two decades at 4026 24th St.

"People are very upset," said Star Magic owner Shlomo Ayal of New York City. "They say it's a sign of the changes on the street. They also have asked me things like, 'What are we going to have here now — another Starbucks?'"

In response to that question, building

owner Elisa Ining says that she is still uncertain of her plans for the storefront. But her first thought would be to expand her own business, Elisa's Health Spa, the hot tubs and massage studio she operates above Star Magic. "I think I'll expand down below," said Ining. "But first I have a lot of remodeling to do."

The end of Star Magic was not amicable. Ining had Ayal evicted for not paying his January and February rent. But Ayal said he was planning to shut down anyway.

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"That's it. That's the end. My heart is broken," said Carol Chandler when she saw the closing sign on Star Magic, the store that enchanted 24th Street for 19 years. Photo by Beverly Tharp

RAIN...

By Douglas A. Konecky

It's got to be the rain. It has been raining for days, weeks, months. San Francisco has become Seattle, Portland, Zaire. My basement has water bubbling up through the concrete. The carpet downstairs has a suspicious round wet mark on it that won't go away. The 50-year-old skylight over the 100-year-old kitchen table drips brown rainwater into my soup. The cat won't go outside. She keeps peeing on the floor. She looks up at me and says: "Hey, it's not my fault. Make it stop raining."

Last fall I put in a new garden in the back yard. Little did I know I was creating Lake Powell. These days are dark, gloomy, dreary, and all the adjectives that combine glumness with moisture, like stormy, blustery, turbulent.

It starts to work on your head. Nothing seems quite right. There's a reason that overpriced coffee began in Seattle. Their brains have become soggy up there. For the first time, I understand.

Here come the early-morning showers. Or are these last night's late-evening showers? I am trying to start Danny's car. Danny is my 22-year-old son. He is down in Santa Cruz, finishing college, with my car. I am attempting to get his 13-year-old Toyota moving, so I can take it down to Don's Friendly Auto Service to have his defroster fixed.

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In the Pink. The rains of February have washed the streets and flushed the sewers of our fair neighborhood. And with the occasional sunny day, blossoms like these on Jersey Street are appearing and brightening the moods of gardeners and passersby. Keep a good thought and maybe the mosquito population won't be as huge as we feared.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

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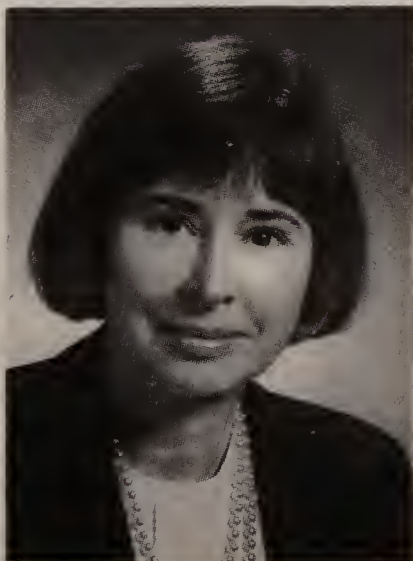
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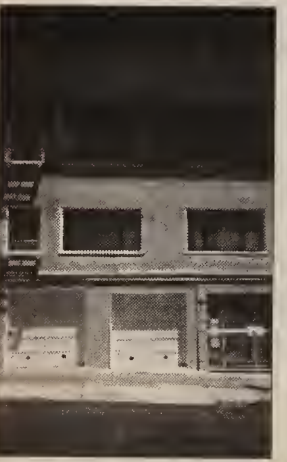
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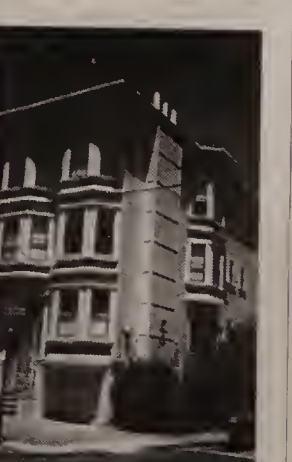
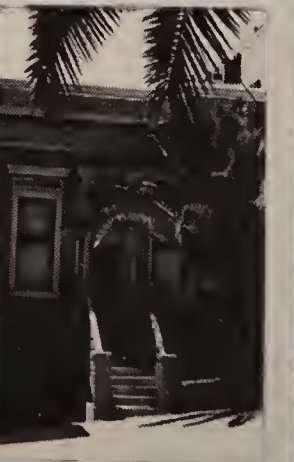


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LETTERS 32¢

Neighbor Foils Car Break-In

Editor:

I would like to say thank you to the woman who called the police as our car was being broken into at 3 a.m. on Feb. 8 at the corner of Elizabeth and Vicksburg.

Since the police caught the man, she not only saved us from losing the things that were in the car, but she also prevented many other break-ins. Thanks for being such a great neighbor!

Amy Gustincic
Via e-mail

Indoor Cats Live Longer

Editor:

I read with sadness the February *Voice* story about the death of Amelia, a beloved neighborhood cat. Nevertheless, I think it's time that pet owners realized Noe Valley is not a sleepy little village. There is lots of traffic and lots of opportunities for our beloved pets to come to sad ends.

Thankfully, Amelia died at the ripe old age of 17, and her travels around the neighborhood made her many friends. But how many pets' lives are cut short by being run over?

I might add that running over a pet accidentally is as traumatic to the driver as it is to the pet's owner. At least the pet's owner had the option of keeping her pet out of harm's way. In addition to grief counseling, the SPCA should, in these cases, make it clear that they do not endorse letting cats roam freely.

I admit it might make for some guilty feelings, but I think Amelia's owner/companion bears responsibility.

Wendy Beck
Church Street

Let's Just Snuff out the Smokers

Editor:

I personally would like to see the death penalty for all smokers. They are all going to die anyway, and I say, the sooner the better.

America is such a great country, or is it just California that I adore? Where else can you implement a law that puts bad people (who smoke cigarettes, yikes!) out on the dark and dreary streets in the cold and rain to satisfy their disgusting, filthy, and unpopular habit?

Smoking is so un-Californian. I am empowered as I walk by my neighborhood bars and see only nonsmokers who are so happy to have an empty, smoke-free bar that they can go to once a month and have A drink. After all, A drink is good for your health, and your health is everything. And besides, socializing with the bartender is really much better without the crowd. It just tickles me to know that the State of California can and will put small business owners out of business and many employees out of work. I am proud to be one of the righteous people, and I rule.

My next plan of attack, as a Californian, will be to turn all bars into a new, oh so popular Drinking Health Club, where after you accomplish 30 minutes on the Stairmaster, you are required to have two drinks to protect your cholesterol level. However, the big drawback will be that you must give the bartender a big tip because they are used to the big bucks smokers leave them, and if you don't, the bartender is prone to get cranky and might

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People Have a Right to Clean Air

Editor:

Thanks for including in your recent article ["Most Barflies Say Smoking Ban Is a Drag," *Voice* February 1998] some opinions from people who agree that smokers have no right to make the air toxic (with carbon monoxide, benzene, ammonia, formaldehyde, etc.) for everyone else, especially in someone else's workplace.

Bartenders have every right to earn their living free from toxic air. Non-selfish smokers can smoke as much as they want...outside.

Your story asked: Will smoking in bars become a distant memory like smoking in airplanes? Yes. But only if we keep foremost in our minds that secondhand smoke from a burning cigarette inflicts disease on the person next to you, and that you no longer have the right to hit your neighbor in the lungs, any more than you can hit your neighbor in the nose. Your "right" stops when you inflict harm on another.

Want to save the smokefree bar law from possible repeal? Contact state senators John Burton, (415) 447-1240, and Quentin Kopp, (650) 301-1721, now.

Robert E. Gordon
Church Street

Voice Mail

THE VOICE welcomes letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or send e-mail to jaxvoice@aol.com. Please include your name, address, and phone number, so we can contact you if we have questions. Another way to reach us is via our web site: www.noevalleyvoice.com. There you'll find a history of the paper, the Class Ad listings, and select stories from current and past issues. Hope to hear from you soon.



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LETTERS 32 CENTS

Continued from Page 4

make you have your drink out in the rain. Two drinks per session, that's all you get! And don't forget that big tip.

I will be oh so sorry if these fun-loving establishments get put out of business. You know, they really are bad places where bad people sit around expressing their woes to one another while drinking and having —dare I even say it?— a CIGARETTE!

I will also be so sorry if these establishments get taken over by those big corporate chains. Oops, I forgot, chain stores are quite popular now. And I forgot that I just love Starbucks where you have to say *short* instead of small, *tall* instead of medium, and *grande* instead of large, and then there is *venti* (what the hell is that?!).

Now for that secondhand smoke issue, those commercials are great. They have me thinking about death every day. After all, that is their job, and now I am really afraid to die and I know that awful smoke is going to get me. I don't think about the pollution or the buses anymore, or even running into a tree, mainly because I don't ski. I don't even think about my weight problem or how poorly I eat or that I drink too much or that I never exercise, but I do think a lot about smokers because I just enjoy hating them. I am so superior.

I really do love America. I just couldn't live in a country where people still have the freedom to eat and drink and enjoy life as they see fit.

God bless America, and especially thank you, California, my kind of state.

Ruthanna Levy
Liberty Street

Farewell to Bill Fahr, 1944–1997

Dear friends and neighbors,

I met Bill Fahr in 1980. I was looking for a teacher who could clarify certain “mystical” experiences that were opening doors to dreams. At that time Bill was living at the eastern edge of Noe Valley in a top-floor apartment. A friend took me there, and as I walked through the door, I had a strong sense of déjà vu. When I left that day, I knew I would study with him,

and I did, for two years. We kept in touch for many years thereafter.

When I heard Bill had passed into spirit, I felt no sadness. Strange? Not really, since I felt he had chosen his time of departure well — on Nov. 2, All Souls' Day—a time for honoring the ancestors. Bill left to join his beloved mother and grandfather and all those wonderful souls, recently departed, who seem to radiate their lights back to those of us still struggling on earth.

Bill Fahr taught classes in metaphysics, the Alice Bailey teachings, astrology, cosmology, and spiritual healing. He had a love of the stars — astrology and astronomy. Over the years, he kept his prices at a level most students could afford and he did not advertise (people knew by word of mouth). He lived modestly, and we learned so much, so quickly, from him.

Bill had a great sense of humor, and our class would often erupt into laughter. He had an appreciation of beauty and nature, and a love of music. He also had a sweet tooth, and we often brought treats to class to share. Once when I picked him up at the airport after a class he'd taught in Bellingham, Washington, I gave him a box of fresh-baked brownies. We chatted about using crystals and meditation to help move past the pressures of the times we live in. Now I treasure that memory.

Our class bonded as a spiritual family, and although many of us have gone our separate ways, we have often checked in with Bill and each other. In times of crisis, we've been able to lovingly support one another.

In November, Bill Fahr's life was celebrated on his favorite mountain, and a family of foxes and many hawks came to say goodbye. On that rainy-sunny Friday, a rainbow seemed to light his way home.

Bill, thank you for opening doors to higher consciousness and helping us go through them unafraid. Shine on, friend, teacher, and mentor to many. You made a difference. Rest in peace. *Vaya con Dios.*

Kim Mercuri Bullis
Clipper Street

Editor's note: Kim Bullis also writes that she celebrated her 75th birthday in July “with my family of friends and my son at the Morrison Planetarium. At that time, I asked for 20 more summers here.” Thank you for your heartfelt tribute to Bill Fahr, Kim.

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Bredas Still Breeding Complaints

Continued from Page 1

cases, the claimant may then proceed and file a lawsuit.

Doug Applegate, a lawyer with the firm Seiler, Yee & Epstein, which represents the majority of the cases, explained that rather than being a blanket class-action lawsuit, this will be a consolidated lawsuit, meaning the individual suits will be tried together but ruled on separately.

"When something is a legal nuisance, it's the responsibility of the people causing the problem to solve it," said Applegate. "It's one thing perhaps for elected officials to debate on what to do behind closed doors, but they're going to have to explain these claims to a jury some day, so we hope they'll come up with a way to fix the problem."

Jason Allen-Rouman, who lives at the corner of Church and 25th streets, has foundation cracks in his home that weren't there a year ago when the house was inspected prior to his moving in. Today Allen-Rouman is suing Muni for damages, even though he knows that



Some Church Street homeowners have joined residents along the L-Taraval line in filing legal complaints against the city's new heavier (and whinier) streetcars. Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

problems are likely to persist.

"There are experts who came in before these cars were introduced and made claims that houses built on sandy foundations will experience earth and structural movement directly related to the cars," Allen-Rouman said. "It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that if you're sitting in your living room and a Breda car moves by and shakes the entire house, that's what's causing the damage."

Elaine Cartwright, senior project manager for Muni, says the city is addressing the problem but that research and development take time. According to Cartwright, Muni is looking at additional software modifications proposed by General Electric, the makers of the car's motors. G.E. has suggested "chopping" the pure-tone frequency that is causing the screeching.

"If they chop it up into a million different pieces, in theory it should make the noise inaudible," said Cartwright. "We want to do lab tests to get a fix on it and make sure it will work, but we're confident that it will."

Cartwright denied reports that Muni has recently purchased more of the Breda cars, although she doesn't rule out the possibility that Muni still intends to replace its entire fleet of orange-and-white Boeings with the Bredas.

"The public would be very upset to find out that the city intends to buy more Breda cars, and other publications have agitated that situation. That is not the case," said Cartwright. "There are 59 more cars needed, and it is true that we believe it would make the most economical and logistical sense to do that with the Breda cars."

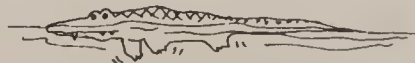
"However, the contract for more vehicles has not been finalized in any sense of the word, and that is not a consequence of more lawsuits being filed," she continued. "We have not stopped looking for solutions, and we intend to find one."

But words such as these are cold comfort to John and Mary Bernie, who say the cars have caused damage to their home ranging from the usual cracks in the plaster and stucco, to the kitchen sink actually detaching from the wall. John Bernie says he has been attending Muni and DPT meetings since February of last year and has gotten nothing but the run-around.

"Every meeting I went to I ended up with more questions," said Bernie. "Last November Mayor Brown said, 'It's like the fog, we have to live with it,' and [Muni chief Emilio] Cruz said things were as good as they were going to get. That's when I decided to file a lawsuit."

Bernie passed out fliers along the L-Taraval line at the beginning of January advertising a meeting to rally against the Breda car disturbances. Fifty people showed up. Collectively they are hoping a little guided pressure on the city will encourage quicker results.

"It's like a 2.8 to 3.2 earthquake when one of these cars passes by, depending on where you're at in the house," said Bernie. "I'm a native San Franciscan, so I know what I'm talking about when I say that. I mean I swear, I'm thinking about getting a seatbelt for my Barcalounger." □



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Neighbors Trim Down Noe Street Project

By Loren J. Bialik

A developer and his neighbors have reached a compromise for a new building to be erected next to the community garden at Noe and Cesar Chavez streets. The four-story, two-family townhouse will replace a vacant one-story cottage, which was condemned by the city after a 1995 mudslide hurled rocks into the back of the house. (See "Soaked Hillside Gives Way," February 1995 *Voice*.)

At a Board of Permit Appeals hearing Feb. 4, property owner Gerry Agosta agreed to reduce the length and height of his proposed building at 1344-48 Noe St. The compromise was brokered by former supervisor and current city treasurer Susan Leal, who lives on the block.

"Before this compromise," said James Ellingsen, who lives a few doors down from the project, "the house would have extended 11 1/2 feet back beyond other houses, creating a wall for the neighbors. Now we will have open space."

Still, he and several other neighbors are not totally satisfied. "We object to the size of the building and the lack of parking. But if the new plans the developer submits conform with the compromise, we won't appeal this further," said Ellingsen.

Agosta, whose office is in the Mission (and whose wife, Lisa Moresco, co-owns Natural Resources on Castro), is happy to hear that. "It's not exactly what we wanted either, but we're glad a solution was reached. We'd like to move on with this project," he said.

Before any construction can begin, however, he must stabilize the steep hill behind the cottage and the community garden, planted 13 years ago by neighbors and members of Friends of Noe Valley.

"Three different engineering firms have taken a look at the hill," said Agosta. "The city has approved their recommendations" for shoring up the property.

Agosta said building on the site should begin in March. He also repeated his promise not to encroach on the garden ("Builder Vows to Protect Community Garden," November 1997 *Voice*). □

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The Real Estate Corner

with Bill Flanigan

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March Is Women's History Month and you can read all about it at the Noe Valley Library, which stocks an impressive collection of women's literature. Photo by Pamela Gerard

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Star Magic Now A Black Hole

Continued from Page 1

"It became too difficult to manage from a distance," said Ayal, who also owns three other Star Magic stores in New York. "I had good local management for years. He would take care of the little things. But since he left, it took up too much of my time."

Ayal said closing Star Magic was emotionally difficult and that he flew out the first week of February to tell the employees himself. "I got to San Francisco and went to the store, then walked around for 45 minutes and called my wife to tell her 'I can't do it. I can't tell them.'"

But he did tell the employees, and for the next few days the workers had their hands full, selling off most of the store's inventory for half price.

Ayal said that on the last day of the sale, he overheard a customer talking with a boy that Ayal judged to be about 13 years old. The customer told the boy a little bit about Star Magic's history and said that he had begun coming to the store when he was just a couple of years older than the boy. "As I listened to him, I learned a few things I didn't even know about the early years," said Ayal.

Ayal acquired Star Magic and two of its sister stores in 1988. He took over the business from the men who founded it—Robert Hanfling and Justin Moreau.

Hanfling came up with the idea for the store in 1978. At the time, he was running a business that manufactures and sells store fixtures, Magic Glass on Harrison Street (he still owns it today). November and December had always been slow months for Hanfling, so he decided to open a gift shop to help with the lag in his income during the holiday season.

He rented the storefront at 3995 24th St.—now occupied by Starbucks Coffee—for the Christmas season of 1978. The store he opened was called Gifts of the Magi.

"I went out and got telescopes and crystals and recorded music and other things to sell at the store that were consistent with my world view," Hanfling recalls. "It was a synthesis of science, religion, and beauty."

Gifts of the Magi was so popular that he decided to join forces with Moreau to launch a permanent version under a new name. The partners opened the new Star Magic in Ining's building in 1979.

Hanfling and Moreau were good friends and also members of a commune that originated in Bolinas and called itself the Church of the Gentle Brothers and Sisters.

Many church members worked at Star Magic over the years. One of the most popular was Esther Goldman. "She's a beautiful woman and was quite famous on the street," said Hanfling. "Gibbsen Young and Julie Ready were also very popular store managers."

"But Justin is the real hero in all of this," Hanfling continued. "A lot of the beauty of the store was due to his being a beautiful person. He had such a big heart, and he loved his customers and he loved his employees."

Moreau also helped create the store's atmosphere, with its soft, celestial music and galaxy of shimmering lights and gems.

In 1982, the two owners opened an-

other Star Magic in New York City, then brought in a new partner, Daniel Larocca. A third store, also in New York, was launched, and business was booming. But in 1986, Larocca died of cancer. His death threw Hanfling and Moreau off center both emotionally and financially.

"He [Larocca] was in charge of bookkeeping, and did a very good job of it," said Hanfling. "In 1987, we had problems with bookkeeping, so we went into the marketplace to find an investor."

That was when they met Shlomo Ayal and invited him to buy into the company. Though he would not elaborate, Hanfling said that he and Moreau were surprised to discover that by 1988 Ayal had taken over a controlling share of Star Magic's stock. "Through bad business dealings, Ayal wound up getting most of the ownership of the company," Hanfling said.

Moreau turned around and took out a second mortgage on his house to buy back some of the stock that Ayal had acquired. "Justin stuck with it in New York all those additional years until 1996," said Hanfling. "Then he moved back to Michigan, which is where he's from."

Hanfling said he knew San Francisco's Star Magic was in trouble when Ayal contacted him last October to discuss Hanfling's returning to the business.

"I worked with him from October to December to determine if it was possible for me to return to Star Magic," he said. "But I decided it wasn't viable."

"Ayal has his strengths—he watches his pennies and is a good accountant," said Hanfling. "But he doesn't have the same feel for employee relations that Justin did."

Hanfling was also critical of the merchandise he'd seen stocked on Star Magic's shelves for the past few years. "It was the cheapest possible product at the highest possible price," he said. "People in the neighborhood noticed that it was becoming kind of junky."

But Noe Valley Merchants Association President Robert Roddick says he has always enjoyed perusing the goods at Star Magic. "I lament the fact that it's closing. It was a very unique store," he said.

Roddick doesn't believe that Star Magic is another fallen domino in a trend on 24th Street for small, independently owned businesses to be replaced by chain stores.

"Do I think it's a sign of the times? No, I don't go for the doomsday approach," Roddick said. "Stores come and go on 24th and Church streets on a regular basis. It's quite a job for our association just to keep track of them."

But longtime Noe Valley resident Miriam Blaustein thinks that Star Magic may be one of a kind. "That the store was called Star Magic was apt, because it was magic," she said. "I loved watching the faces of tourists or other people who had never been there when they walked in the door. They'd just light up."

Blaustein is also a bit worried about Star Magic's replacement. "We have to avoid any more chain stores," she said. "And I just hope it isn't another food place that goes in there."

One thing it will not be is a coffee shop. According to an aide to Supervisor Sue Bierman, her office is working with the Friends of Noe Valley to pass legislation making permanent the 18-month moratorium on specialty grocery and retail coffee shops on 24th Street in Noe Valley.

She expected the legislation to go before the full board within a month or two.

□

SAVE A NOE COMMUNITY COURTS MEETING

The Noe Courts, an Dauglass Street between 24th and Elizabeth Streets, has long been functionally abandoned by the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department.

Despite a long history of community activism around the Courts, numerous problems have become evident in the last several years.

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(23rd & Sanchez)
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Hey, I've Got a Dollar. Juan Carlos Amezcua displays his fortune and winning smile in front of the Bernal Library on Cortland Avenue.
Photo by Beverly Tharp

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Rain Rain Rain

Continued from Page 1

But it's been raining since Toyota put the "To" in Tokyo. Dan's car won't start. I try to pop his hood but his hood latch is broken. I need a pair of pliers. The pliers are in the house. The house is down the street. I will also need my wife's jumper cables and her car, which is parked down a different street. Now the heavens open with a huge inundating belly laugh and I am quickly drenched. I run under a tree.

I have no time to ask myself why I am standing in the rain trying to get my son's car started. It's 8:30 a.m. In 10 minutes the little Cushwoman will come zipping by and give me a ticket, followed by the android who sweeps the streets, never mind that it's been pouring since September and the streets are brilliantly clean, antiseptically clean. It's going to cost Dan and me \$25 if I don't get his car started, and Dan has \$0.

The car starts.

It's streaming buckets of sloppy rain. I'm down at Don's Auto Service. "You know, Doug, HEH," laughs Don, a nice man, one who has been putting his own children through Stanford aided by monthly donations from three-car-family idiots like ourselves, "this ain't gonna be cheap."

It's never, never cheap. "Naw, Doug, HEH," he chuckles, "it's like computers, one day they're workin', next day they're obsolete, you know, HEH?"

Raining like Custer saw Indians. All day, all night. I can forgive bad humor. I'm in bad humor myself.

"Just call me when you're all done, okay, Don?" I say, and walk back up Mission Street with my half cup of cold coffee. Don's shop is at the confluence of Mission and San Jose, and I always use Mission when I leave Don's, under the demented delusion that he might think I live in those banged-up apartments over there and therefore go easier on me when it comes time to present the friendly damage.

It's deluging lightly. Or drizzling heavily. Or raining mediumly. The intersection at San Jose and Randall is immense, fully 10 lanes wide. The traffic light cycles and cycles, then finally changes to green. I see a gray-bearded bum in a red sweatshirt leaning against a power pole. As I am thinking to myself how happy I am not to be homeless in weather like this, I finish my cold coffee and step out into the street....

The sound goes like this:
WhEEEEEE EEEEEEE *gulp* WA WA WA
WA WA WA WA dup dup dup dup
KA-THUUMP crackaBOOOM!

A lady driving a late-model Taurus, straining to beat the light whEEEEEE, guns across the intersection EEEEEEE, belatedly notices that the traffic ahead of her is completely backed up *gulp* and hits her brakes WA WA WA WA WA WA, but it's raining dup dup dup dup and the intersection is too wet for anything but salamanders so she slams into the back of a little Honda KA-THUUMP which rams into the J-car island crackaBOOOM!

I run across the street to the crunched Honda. A woman is weeping in the front seat, cradling a baby in her arms. An evil-looking man in a hairnet is already flying out of the Honda heading for the car that hit them. I spin around.

The young woman driving the Taurus is in absolute hysterics. She is being comforted by the bum in the red sweatshirt. She is hyperventilating dangerously. "It's okay, lady, no one's hurt WOOWOOWOO, it's okay, lady, no one's



A mangled umbrella on 24th Street sums it all up, doesn't it? Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

hurt WOOWOOWOO, it's okay, lady...."

For a moment I forget the rain. I run to the Shell station, call 911. "Can I help you?" says a measured, unemotional voice. No rain down at the 911 office, that's for sure.

I explain what has happened. "May I have your name?" "Douglas..." "Are you involved in the accident?" "No, I'm just trying to..." "Do you wish an ambulance to be..." "No, I don't think..." "May I have your address, phone number, proof of insurance, name of favorite TV show, opinion on Iraq..." "JUST SEND A COP WILLYA LADY!" I scream and before I can even get back to the corner, he's there.

Everybody's irritated, except the cop. He's like a cozy hot towel. "Slow down, everybody, it's just a little rain," he says. I leave him my name, shake the good samaribum's hand.

Ten minutes later I'm home. I open the front door. An acrid, pungent aroma blasts me in the nose.

The cat peed on the floor. "I warned you," she says. □

Douglas Konecky is a writer and musician who runs the San Francisco Songwriters Workshop in Noe Valley.



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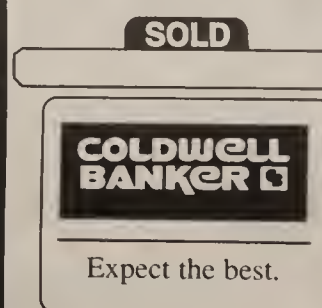
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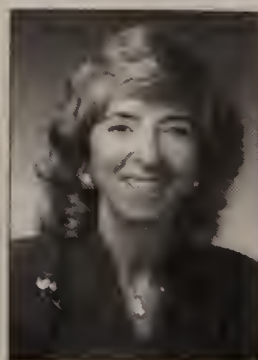
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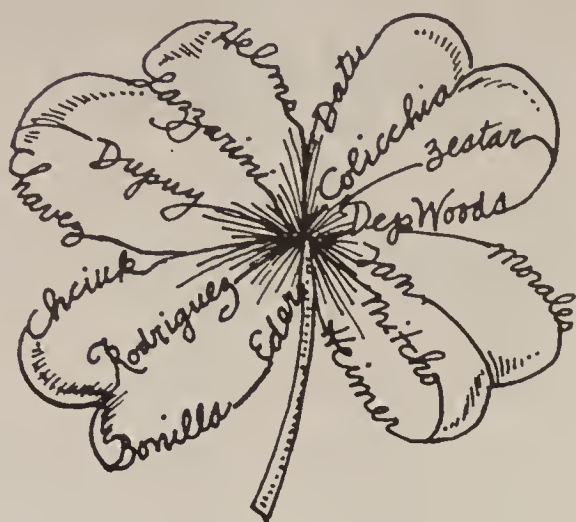
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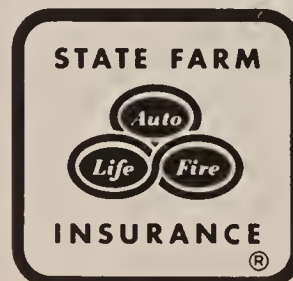


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Church Street Gets a Coffee Shop, And It's Not a Chain!

By Loren J. Bialik

People who live along Church Street had a case of the chain store jitters last month, prompted by a boarded-up storefront, a couple of "for sale" signs, and the fleeting appearance of two mysterious "Starbucks" agents. But once we looked into it, the fears seemed based largely on rumor and cappuccino.

A new coffeehouse will go in next to Drewes Market on Church near 29th. It'll fill the Gibraltar Realty storefront at 1708 Church, now boarded up.

However, the cafe is not—repeat *not*—a Starbucks or even a Martha's clone. Instead, it's the baby of "home boys" Harry Philibosian and Eric Alexanderson, who have been working (at Gibraltar) or living in Noe Valley for more than 25 years.

Harry's wife, Denise Philibosian, and Eric's wife, Linnea Alexanderson, are also partners in the cafe, which will be a "European-style coffeehouse with open windows so you feel like you're sitting outside," says Harry Philibosian.

"If you picture the TV show *Cheers*, take away the liquor and add food, that's what it will be like—a place where people know each other."

The coffeehouse will be called Cafe J—"we wanted to associate the name with the streetcar"—and will serve soups, sandwiches, quiches, pastries, bagels, smoothies, and of course coffee.

"We'll all operate it, but Denise will do more of the work in the kitchen since she was a cook in more traditional coffee shops while in college in Michigan," Philibosian said.

"We're a two moms and two pops business," he joked. "No, we're not a chain."

The remodeling has already started, and Cafe J should open in about two months.

Star Bakery to Go Italian?

Meanwhile, Laura Catapano, owner of Star Bakery across the street, says she is thinking of turning her old-fashioned bakery into something of a trattoria.

"I'm planning on giving the store on Church a facelift and offering simple, light Italian food. I'm busy with my other store right now [on Van Ness], so the changes will probably take place in May or June," Catapano said.

The new cafe would be both eat-in and take-out. But the bakery part of Star Bakery—for many years Noe Valley's main source for Irish soda bread—would also



Of Parishes Past: This majestic view of St. Paul's Church has not been seen since 1915, when St. Paul's Intermediate School was first erected at Church and 29th streets. That building was demolished last fall to make way for a new elementary school. Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

be maintained. "Irish soda bread will always be available," said Catapano.

Asked whether she was considering selling to a chain, Catapano said that her neighborhood loyalties probably wouldn't allow for that. "I live at 27th and Noe streets. I wouldn't want to change anything. Everyone knows each other here."

Thai Food Fills One Spot

Voice readers already know that Stellings Market has left its corner at 1700 Church St., opposite Star Bakery, and moved its deli items, groceries, and videos next door to Drewes, the meat and poultry shop. This has freed up Stellings' old storefront, which is set to become a Thai restaurant.

Though there was no sign of the new owners—or the restaurant's exact name or menu—workers were busy remodeling last month. So it looks like the Thai restaurant is going ahead.

But several other storefronts may be up for grabs.

The building that houses Les Garaventa's CPA office at 1679 Church is on the market. So is a corner building at 27th and Church, the former home of Lady

Sybil's Closet.

Sonia Spahis, owner of Akropolis Travel Agency at Church and 30th, recently died. Neighbors wonder what will

Continued on Next Page

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Auto Row. An SFPD patrol car cruises up a quiet Noe Valley street. Photo by Ed Buryn

Things Are Percolating on Church Street

Continued from Previous Page

become of that corner. And Verona Pizza at 291 30th St. is currently shuttered, due to an owner's illness.

Church Produce Targeted

These storefronts could be ripe for a takeover. And places like Church Produce at the corner of 30th Street are starting to feel vulnerable too.

"Business has been down 25 to 30 per-

cent since they put in the Muni ramps [causing the loss of several parking spaces]," said John Hilas, owner of the produce store. But parking was already a tight squeeze. "People park and then take the bus downtown. Their cars sit here all day," he complained. Hilas would like to see a two- or three-hour limit on parking around Upper Noe Recreation Center.

Recently Hilas was approached by two men who said they owned a coffee shop on 24th Street. They asked if they could lease his space. Though they didn't say who they represented, Hilas assumed it was Starbucks. After 21 years in the busi- ness, "I'm not moving," Hilas said.

But how long can local store owners hold out against the megabucks offered by the chains?

Shops and Residents Form an Alliance

About 20 residents and merchants in the area formed a committee in February to address this question and ponder the fate of Church Street's once sleepy com- mercial strip.

"We wanted to discuss a response to the many changes in the neighborhood," said Janice Gendreau, of Upper Noe Neighbors. "Residents and merchants want to develop a strategy to meet our mutual needs."

One idea would be to ask the City Plan- ning Department to put a lid on certain types of businesses. They could do this by establishing a "special use district" on Church Street. In the early '80s, residents and merchants won such "quotas" on 24th Street — on bars, restaurants, and liquor stores. Then in 1996 the city added controls on takeouts and coffee shops.

Still, a special use district for Church Street may be down the road a piece.

"Right now we want to work together — merchants and residents — to build a consensus on what the Upper Noe area should be like," said Tom Maravilla, owner of MikeyTom Market at Church and Day. "People working together is what makes our neighborhood great." □

Web WordsS

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POLICE BEAT

Cybercops at Your Service

By Officer Lois Perillo

Who do you call for tips on crime prevention and personal safety? Crime-busters on the Internet! The San Francisco Police Officers Association (POA) is now in cyberspace at www.sfpoa.org. Once you reach the web site, just click on Crime Prevention, and many topics will pop up, including home security, bicycle security, vehicle safety, fraud, child abuse, elder abuse, sexual abuse, and battered women. Select one of the topics, and our best crimefighting advice will appear on your screen.

The POA also invites interested individuals and community groups to join our cyber mailing list at sfpoaoff@slip.net.

Two Slaps for Drug Dealing

Some months ago, I received a letter titled "Confidential to San Francisco Police Only." The time has come to release some of that letter. The author wrote that a relative was being drawn into drug use by a Noe Valley man who "acts real friendly to everyone and tries to talk to everyone he can. What's so sad is that he is not a young guy—he's an old guy, almost 60 years old—and he's getting a lot of young people hooked on drugs. This is what makes me really angry and disgusted. So I have to do something about it. Writing to you seemed the best thing."

The writer provided details about the alleged cocaine dealer. I did the background investigation, then forwarded the file to the Narcotics Detail, whose investigators began watching the suspect's house on 25th Street near Church. After witnessing and documenting drug sales, the officers obtained an arrest warrant and a search warrant, entered the premises for the first time on Dec. 8, and seized cocaine (later verified via lab analysis), measuring scales, plastic packaging, and pay/owe sheets. Terry Berns, 53, was arrested and booked on several felony drug counts. Then he was released.

The next month, after another stakeout, the undercover officers got a new set of search and arrest warrants. On Jan. 7 at 8 p.m., the officers entered with a drug dog and seized cocaine, measuring scales, and phone bills. Berns was again arrested and charged with one misdemeanor and five felony drug charges. He was held in jail

four days, then released pending a court appearance on March 19.

Domestic Violence Reports

There were three incidents of domestic violence reported in Noe Valley during the month of January.

In one of the cases, a 28-year-old woman returned home to her flat on the 400 block of Jersey Street at noon on New Year's Day, only to discover that it had been broken into and vandalized. Paint was spilled inside, and the bedroom window had been nailed shut. The woman reported that the likely culprit was her former boyfriend, who had been seen across the street from her home the night before and who had attempted to follow her when she drove away at 2:30 a.m.

She had also found a piece of hard evidence on her door: a handwritten note from the ex-boyfriend.

Jerks with Caustic Chemicals

When a 30-year-old woman driving northbound on Church Street ignored the harassing words of two 20-year-old men standing at a nearby Muni shelter, one of the men apparently threw a caustic liquid in her face. This disturbing incident occurred Friday, Jan. 16, at 8:25 p.m.

The woman reported that she was stopped at the Church and 24th Street intersection when she heard a man yell, "I want to shag you, baby," a line she recognized from the movie *Austin Powers*. The woman ignored the remark and kept looking straight ahead. Then suddenly, a strange, odorless liquid was splashed in her face, causing her eyes to sting and burn. She managed to drive home, where she flushed her eyes and notified police. The exact nature of the liquid has yet to be determined.

Post Office Robbery a Federal Case

The Noe Valley Post Office on 24th near Castro was robbed on Monday, Jan. 26, after closing time, at 5:35 p.m. While alone in the back of the shop, a 38-year-old postal worker answered a knock at the employees' side door and opened it to a woman brandishing a gun. The suspect, who was about 25, stole money from two locations in the office and ordered the postal worker into the bathroom. She then fled in an unknown direction.

San Francisco police later canvassed the area but found no one who recalled seeing the suspect. The Robbery Detail has now handed over the case to U.S. postal inspectors for further investigation.

Muggings of Old and Young

Earlier in the month, on Jan. 4 at 10:30 p.m., a 61-year-old man who had just parked his car on 22nd Street near San Jose was pushed to the ground by two men in their 20s. The suspects stole

money from the man and then fled in his car. Two days later, police found the car, parked and unoccupied, on Shotwell Street in the Mission District. Although the vehicle was processed by crime techs, no usable evidence was found.

On Jan. 15 at 3:45 p.m., a 12-year-old boy was mugged by two slightly older males at 25th and Castro streets. No further details were available at press time.

Batten Down the Hatches

The first month of 1998 saw 14 burglaries on my turf (which runs from Valencia to Grand View and Cesar Chavez to 21st Street). Eight houses, three apartments, and three garages were all hit.

In one incident, a 15-year-old suspect broke into an apartment on the 4100 block of Cesar Chavez Street, a block from the suspect's home. However, an observant and quick-acting bystander witnessed the break-in, caught the teen, and detained him until police arrived. The young man was booked on burglary at the Youth Guidance Center.

When Fraud Equals Burglary

On Jan. 16 at about 8:30 a.m., a scruffy white man in his early 30s, standing 5-foot-8, thin build, wearing a green sweater, misrepresented himself as a roofing employee to a man affected by Alzheimer's disease. The targeted man let the con man into his building on the 1100 block of Douglass, and the suspect stole some sporting goods.

A couple of weeks later, on Jan. 29 at 9:30 a.m., a 77-year-old woman answered her door and was greeted by a suspicious-looking "PG&E" worker requesting entry to her home on the 400 block of Jersey. The 40-year-old white male—who was 6 feet tall and 240 pounds, with a round face and an earring in his left ear—told the woman he was there "to check the wires."

When she demanded identification from the blue jeans-clad man, he quickly flashed his wallet and again requested entry. She said no. He then asked how many people lived in the house and at what time others might be home. When the woman refused to answer, he asked if she had a back entrance. She told him she was calling the police and ended the contact.

Kudos to her—and to all of you who may have thwarted a crime or helped each other out this month. Ours is truly an interactive and caring community.

Until next time, be safe. And I'll see you on patrol. □

San Francisco Police Officer Lois Perilla covers her Noe Valley beat by foot and by bicycle. If you would like to discuss a neighborhood problem, call her at 558-5404, the community policing line at Mission Station. (For emergencies, dial 911.)



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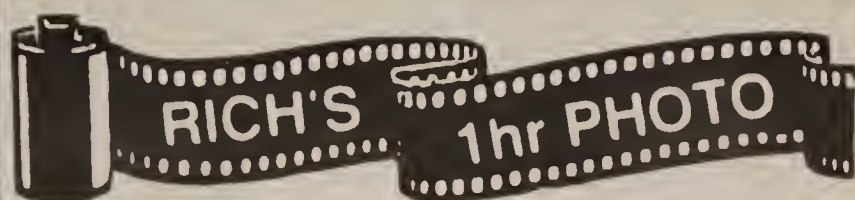
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Edison School Rises Above 'Bad Rap'

By Dodie Hamblen

Fifth-graders at Edison Elementary are proud of their school. They feel that Edison, which sits at the corner of 22nd and Dolores streets, has gotten a bad rap lately, and they want people to know that recent articles in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (Jan. 6, 1998) and the *Independent* (Dec. 2, 1997) do not reflect the positive changes that are taking place at the school.

Those news stories focused on the school's longstanding reputation as "the worst elementary school in San Francisco." They also dwelled on the school district's unsuccessful attempt to rehabilitate Edison by means of reconstitution—a radical process in which the principal and the entire faculty are replaced. Edison was "reconstituted" three years ago.

What the stories failed to convey was the hard work of students and teachers and the renewed sense of hope since the arrival of interim principal Barbara Karvelis in November.

Says fifth-grader Starrkisha Miles, "Now there's less fighting, and we're learning more."

An administrator with many years of hands-on experience in San Francisco schools, Karvelis has come in as a temporary troubleshooter until a new principal can be named next fall. But in just a few short months, she has changed Edison from a public school in turmoil to a school poised for success. New partnerships with the community have been forged, and in an effort to raise low test scores, the school has adopted a special focus on reading.

"We know we're not home yet, but we're getting there," said Karvelis of the school's new goals.

In the fall, a reading assessment at the school found that Edison students were, on average, two years behind in reading. Since then, the school has made literacy its top priority. A new reading program has been adopted—there was none before—and teachers and staff are being trained to use it.

Called Scholastic, the program combines phonics with a whole language approach. Kids in second through fifth grade now spend two hours a day practicing their reading skills. One of those hours is spent in small groups. The school has also hired two full-time "Reading Recovery" specialists to work with at-risk first-graders. One is English speaking, the other Spanish. Previously there was only one part-time reading specialist.

And in February, Edison kicked off a new partnership with Working Assets, the socially progressive phone and credit card company. About 15 of Working Assets' employees have made a long-term commitment to tutoring at the school.

CEO Laura Scher says, "We are very excited about this partnership. Education is such a key issue for the '90s. We wanted to adopt a school that really needed our help." In addition to tutoring, the company will sponsor special projects at least once a year at the school.

Edison is also gathering support from neighbors in the Mission and Noe Valley. Pamela Coxen, a mathematician who last year spent four to six hours a week tutoring kids in teacher Vincent Williams' fourth-grade class, says, "It isn't as bleak as you would think. I volunteered in a wonderful classroom with a terrific teacher." She has nothing but praise for Williams' dedication and teaching ability.

Coxen decided to lend a hand at Edi-



Janice Beckham and Basim Mashni (standing) were among the many students at Edison who wrote letters defending their school from sharp criticism in the media. Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

son to show her strong support for public education. But she also has personal ties to the school. She and her husband live on Fair Oaks Street in the house where he grew up. Her husband went to Edison as a child, and the couple hope to send their son there when he enters school in a few years. Coxen has also volunteered on weekends, helping teachers develop their math curriculum.

The school is getting an additional boost from state and local resources. Class sizes at Edison are smaller than ever as a result of state funding to reduce elementary school class size. Kindergarten through third-grade classrooms have no more than 20 students, and no class has

more than 23. A \$1.5 million renovation of the building is slated for this summer, thanks to a local bond issue. And the school's library will receive \$30,000 for new books this year.

Karvelis feels the community needs to take a fresh look at Edison. "It's a wonderful, wonderful site, with wonderful teachers. Change is happening rapidly. There is a tremendous opportunity here to create a neighborhood school."

She suggests that with new guidelines making admission to the city's alternative schools more difficult, Noe Valley parents might want to consider Edison—a school their kids can walk to—as a viable option. She believes Edison has a

chance to become another Lakeshore, Rooftop, or Clarendon—all desirable alternative schools.

Karvelis admits that in the past, teachers and administrators throughout the district thought students at Edison were out of control and violent. Today, she says, violence is "gone—totally wiped out. The teachers are back in control."

Katie Brackenridge, co-director of Jamestown Community Center, a recreational and educational outreach program that operates out of Edison, says reports of violence at the school were somewhat exaggerated anyway. "I don't see much violence. There's a lot of swearing and a periodic fight, but there has been much less violence in the past four years."

Brackenridge, whose programs are for kids 8 to 18, is concerned that the recent bad press about Edison has hurt the students' self-esteem. "The kids read the newspaper articles and they want to know, 'If my school is bad, am I bad?'"

She also feels the teachers have taken a beating. "To say the teachers are bad is unfair. [Many] are here until nine at night and on weekends. They take time to sit down with tutors to talk about specific student needs. For the most part, the kids really like their teachers."

The fifth-graders in Rhonda Sampson's class heartily agree. Asked what he likes about Edison, 10-year-old Delvin Satele replies instantly: "I like my teacher!" And his response is typical.

Sampson is an energetic educator, and her students are inspired by her creative and respectful approach to teaching. They are also enthusiastic about their class assignments. "I like the things we do, like doing reports. My report is on Zaire. I like learning about what they do there," says student Janice Beckham. Others say they enjoy going to the public library to do research after school.

As a writing assignment, Sampson's students wrote letters to the *Independent* after the paper's negative story in December. Their letters illustrate their anger and hurt. "Because of that article my whole school is upset, and some kids think that they did something wrong," wrote Genevieve Cabanero.

"I wish you would come to our school before writing that Edison Elementary is the worst school," wrote Sandy Chen.

"It looks like you were only here long enough just to take a picture," wrote Basim Mashni.

Rosa Jauquez, a parent who has sent two children to Edison, works as an aide and is the Hispanic parent liaison for the

Continued on Page 18

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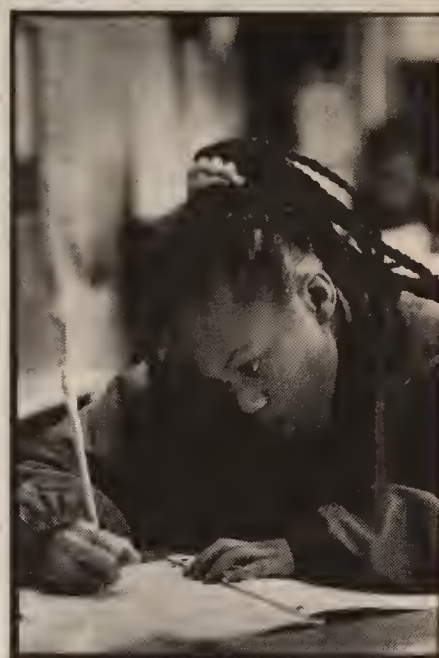
Continued from Page 17

school. "I love this school. It has great potential," she says. "And I am very pleased with the changes. Yesterday I had training for the new reading program, and today when we used it with the kids, it really worked. The problem at Edison is not the children."

Praise for the new efforts at Edison also comes from Gail Kaufman, a spokesperson for School Superintendent Bill Rojas. "Edison has shown tremendous improvements. Strong gains are being made with Dr. Karvelis at the school," Kaufman says.

While Superintendent Rojas is still not satisfied with the school's academic performance—the school ranks 60th out of 65 in reading, and 61st in math—he is pleased with the gains the school has made on the Comprehensive Basic Skills Tests, she says. Test scores are up 4 points in reading and 5.6 points in math.

"Tremendous resources are being directed at Edison," Kaufman adds. "It's



Tiffany Hamilton keeps a journal as part of her writing assignments in Rhonda Sampson's fifth-grade class. Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

been a challenging situation, but we are very pleased with the direction the school is taking."

Former principal Ken Romines, whose book *A Principal's Story* described the chaos and discontent during the school's worst years, is also encouraged by changes at Edison. "The focus is on the kids again. There's a feeling that things are going to work," he says.

The only potential bump in the road ahead is that Karvelis will step down from her temporary assignment in June. However, she plans to participate in the selection of Edison's new principal and to continue her association with the school in any way she can. "I will not abandon Edison. I'm having a great time. I love it. It's been a really rewarding year." □

Those interested in volunteering or tutoring at Edison should contact San Francisco School Volunteers at 274-0250.

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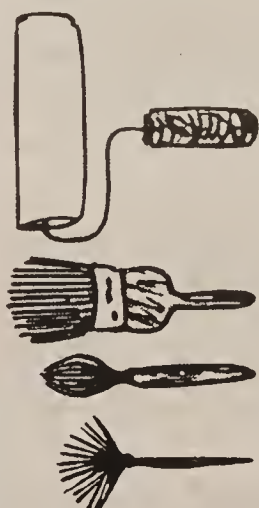
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Sally Brunn's Legacy In Books

By Cameron Alston

A small group has collected outside the Jersey Street library in the late-morning drizzle. Some clutch umbrellas and books. Others entertain their restless toddlers. Glancing at their watches, a few people study the hours of operation posted in the window. They peer at the plaque with the words "S. Brunn" at the top. Then they go back to waiting for the doors to open. They probably don't realize that if it hadn't been for that "S. Brunn," the library doors might stay shut forever.

Sally Brunn moved to Hoffman Avenue in the 1960s. She was active in the neighborhood from the moment she unpacked her boxes. As a member of many community groups, including Friends of Noe Valley, she championed the causes of schools, neighborhoods, and especially branch libraries.

Brunn spearheaded the fights to keep the Noe Valley Library from closing in 1980 and 1988, sparing the branch a fate as a storehouse. She also raised money to fix up the library's community room, and lobbied tirelessly to keep the city from slashing the book budget.

Sally Brunn died of cancer in 1991. The following year, with a swiftness rarely seen in politics, the city renamed the branch at 451 Jersey Street in honor of the woman who worked so hard to protect it. As a further tribute, the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library established a book fund in Brunn's honor.

The fund's endowment has now reached \$17,000—through individual donations and a gift of \$1,000 from Friends



Sally Brunn died in 1991, a couple of months after her 62nd birthday, but she will be long remembered for her contributions to the library that now bears her name.

of Noe Valley. And the money is being used to buy books for the Sally Brunn Collection, a special collection celebrating the spirit of her activism.

Though it will be spread out in libraries across the city, the Sally Brunn Book Collection was officially unveiled at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Branch on Jan. 28. The reception featured speakers from the library community and a personal tribute from Sally's daughter, Nancy Brunn.

More than 200 books from the collection were on display. Books about local politics and grassroots organizing, with titles such as *You CAN Beat City Hall*, *Dirty Politics*, and *The Life and Death of Che Guevara*, form the backbone of the collection. Other topics include school activism, women's issues, and of course, libraries. (Readers should note that right now only two books from the Brunn col-

lection—the Che Guevara book and a biography of Cesar Chavez—are on the shelves at the Noe Valley Library. But more are on the way, the librarians say. In the meantime, borrowers can ask for books to be sent from another branch.)

Each book in the collection is marked by a special bookplate designed by Noe Valley artist Ruth Asawa. Asawa was both a friend and neighbor to Sally Brunn. The design features an oak tree, which symbolizes Brunn's strength of character as well as the many trees she helped plant around James Lick Middle School.

John Brunn, who still lives on Hoffman, jokes that in Noe Valley he has always been "known simply as Sally's husband." On a serious note, he says, "Sally was always soft-spoken in her activism, but very effective. She managed to be active in politics without making enemies, which is difficult to do." Even when she was opposed to someone, she never made it personal, he said.

Fighting for a just cause is laudable in its own right, but to do so with kindness and grace was one of Brunn's most remarkable feats. Through the Sally Brunn Collection, she will continue to inspire people to fight for their communities. □

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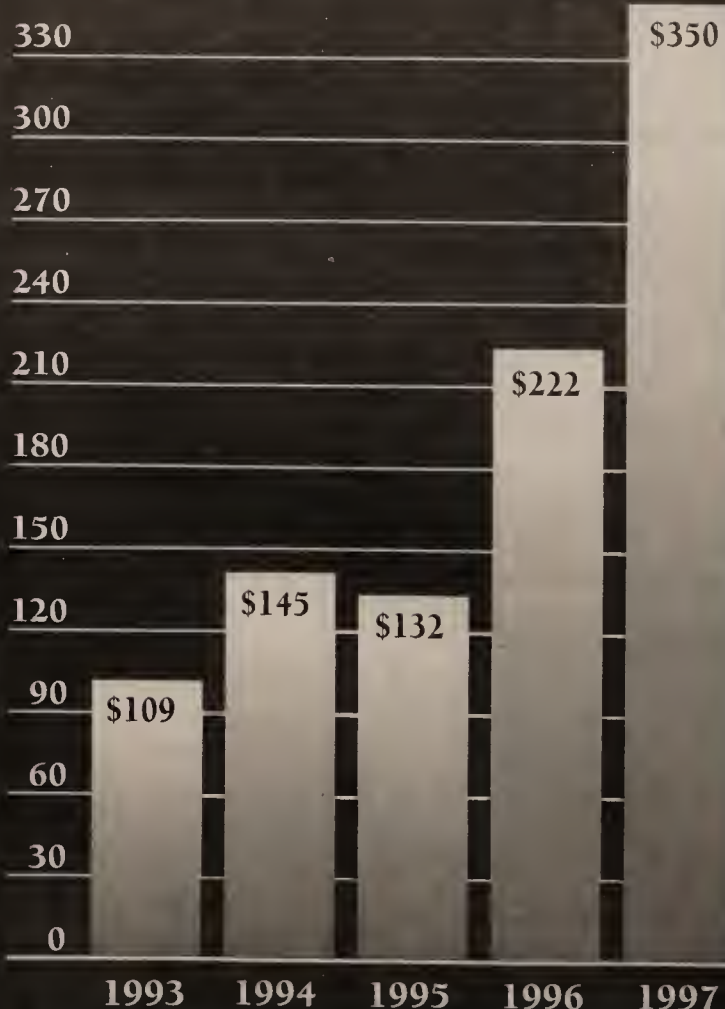
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SHORT TAKES

How to Stick with Lick

Ever wonder what teens are learning in school these days? You'll get to find out when the students at James Lick Middle School share some of their hard-earned knowledge with families and friends at the 1998 Family Literacy Night on Tuesday, March 3.

The kids will explain how to write poetry and stories, conduct interviews, and create oral histories. The evening will also include a "poetry slam," a series of readings in which both students and families can participate. Family Literacy Night will be held from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Bayview Opera House at 4705 Third St.

Meanwhile, teachers and kids at the Noe Valley school—James Lick is on the corner of Noe and 25th—are looking for volunteers to help keep the momentum going. They need one-on-one tutors to help students with English, reading, and math. They'd also welcome volunteers to help teachers in the classroom.

"It's really rewarding to have a relationship with one kid, and to see their growth," says Rachel Weinstein, a mentor at the school. "It's great for them to have their own special person."

Volunteers must be able to help out at least one hour per week. Some training is available through San Francisco School Volunteers, but it's not required.

To volunteer, call Tiffany Lawrence at S.F. School Volunteers at 274-0250.

Wind in the Willows Reunion

Wind in the Willows, the popular preschool at Cesar Chavez and Church streets, will celebrate its 25th anniversary with an auction and reunion of alumni families on Saturday, March 21. The party will get rolling at 7 p.m. at a South of Market photography studio.

The auction will feature such goodies as a stay at Noe Valley's Garden View Bed and Breakfast, a one-month membership in Purely Physical Fitness on Castro Street, and four seats in an MVP box at a San Francisco Giants game.

"This will be a special party because it's a chance for parents of students who attended the school to get together again," says Andrea Wong, mother of Megan, a 4½-year-old Wind in the Willows student. "A lot of local merchants have donated gift certificates and merchandise, so it's a great way to get bargains and have fun."

Raffle tickets will also be sold, to raise money for the school's programs. Prizes include a digital camera, a \$50 gift cer-



The kids in the Singing Rainbow say they'll really let the sun shine in at a joint concert with the San Francisco Children's Chorus at Community Music Center on March 22.

tificate to Firefly Restaurant, and a night at Noe's Nest, a 23rd Street bed and breakfast. To buy raffle tickets prior to the event, stop by Wind in the Willows, 1444 Church St., or by Little Bean Sprouts on 24th Street or Peek-a-Bootique on Castro.

To make reservations and get directions to the party, call the school at 285-5510. The suggested donation for tickets is \$10.

Some "Keane" Irish Poetry

Irish poets—many of them from Noe Valley—will share their work this month at Keane's 3300 Club, a favorite Irish haunt on the outskirts of the neighborhood.

Keane's will celebrate both St. Patrick's Day and the club's 40th anniversary throughout the month of March. On Tuesday, March 10, the club will host an Irish poetry night featuring J.R. Brady, Jon Greene, Frank Holt, Joe Kelly, and Nancy Keane. Other poets can take the floor afterwards during the open mike.

The Irish celebration continues later in the month with a limerick contest on March 24. Free food will be on hand at both events, and you can find your favorite Irish drinks at the bar.

Keane's 3300 Club is located at 3300 Mission St. at 29th. Both events start at 7 p.m. Call ahead at 333-3494 to be listed as a featured performer, or sign up at the club to participate in the open mikes.

The Chorus Meets the Rainbow

Do your kids love music? If so, better take them to hear Noe Valley's own Singing Rainbow Youth Ensemble in concert on Sunday, March 22. The award-winning musical group will appear with the San Francisco Children's Chorus. Both ensembles are under the direction of Diamond Street resident Candy Forest.

The kids will perform a rendition of "Inch Worm" from the movie *Hans Christian Anderson*, "Giraffes," and many other tunes designed to "put the spring back in your step after all this rain," says Forest.

The concert will be held at 3 p.m. at Community Music Center at 544 Capp St. (between 20th and 21st streets). Everyone is invited and admission is free.

A Toast to Activist Clara Fraser

Bay Area Radical Women will celebrate International Women's Day on March 8 by honoring 75-year-old feminist writer Clara Fraser, often called the "Grande Dame of Socialism."

The group is launching Fraser's new book—*Revolution, She Wrote*, a collection of essays and commentaries on women and politics—at a special reception and dinner. Award-winning poet Nellie Wong

will read selections from the book, and 86-year-old poet and writer Tillie Olsen will also perform. Copies of *Revolution, She Wrote* will be available for purchase.

The event begins at 3 p.m., and a salmon buffet dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. for a \$10 donation. The book launch will be at New Valencia Hall, 1906 Mission St., near the 16th Street BART Station. For more information, call 864-1278.

Go Loco for Jamestown

Get ready for a great party—to benefit an even better cause. The second annual Jamestown Jam is coming up on Thursday, March 19. The Smokejumpers—a "punk rockabilly" band—will warm up the crowd. Then Dr. Loco and his Rockin' Jalapeño Band will headline the event.

"Dr. Loco plays everything from salsa to blues to Latin rock," says Katie Brackenridge of Jamestown Community Center. "It's really good dance music."

Proceeds will support Jamestown Community Center's summer activities for Mission District young people, such as free academic programs, sports teams, tutoring, and health services. More than 300 youths ages 8 to 18 participate in Jamestown-sponsored programs every year.

The fundraiser will take place at the Transmission Theater at 308 11th St. from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. For tickets or more information, call Jamestown at 647-4709.

Computer Classes for Seniors

Senior citizens who'd like to learn about computers will get their chance starting March 9. The Mission YMCA will spon-

Continued on Page 23



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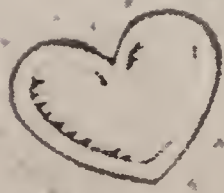
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Whoa! Comin' Through. The intersection of Noe and 26th streets is one of many in Noe Valley where it pays to proceed with caution.
Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

SHORT TAKES

Continued from Page 21

sor a four-week computer class geared especially for older people. Students will learn the basics of working with a Macintosh and will learn to use ClarisWorks, a standard word processing program.

Peggy Cartwright, an instructor with six years' experience, will be leading the course. Classes will meet twice a week for two hours each session.

"There's a lot of repetition to help the students feel comfortable with the computer," says Gloria Garcia of the Mission Y. "The first thing people have to do is get over their fear of breaking the computer. Then they can start to learn to use it."

To provide lots of practice, the class cost of \$32 includes six months of computer lab time.

The group will meet at the YMCA, 4080 Mission St., on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1 to 3 p.m. To register, call 586-6900.

Lowell a 'Wonderful Town'

The kids at Lowell High School are busy memorizing lines and hammering

sets for their annual spring musical, scheduled to open March 19. They'll be performing *Wonderful Town*, a Leonard Bernstein musical that tells the story of two small-town sisters from Ohio who find excitement in New York City.

"They meet all the crazy characters you would think of from Greenwich Village in 1935," says Director Diane Price. "I really think this is going to be awfully good."

The Lowell Drama Department has paired up with dance majors from San Francisco State University to produce the musical. Wendy Jones, the choreographer, is receiving school credit at State for the project. Music will be provided by the Lowell High School orchestra.

Performances are scheduled for Thursday through Saturday, March 19 to 21, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, March 22, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$6 and can be purchased at the door. The musical will be held at the Carol Channing Theater at Lowell High School, 1101 Eucalyptus Drive. Call 759-2730 for more information.

Nominate a Leader

The San Francisco Foundation has announced a new Community Leadership Awards program to honor individuals or groups who have helped improve or protect Bay Area communities. The foundation will award four prizes—each a lump sum of \$10,000 for individuals or \$20,000 for organizations.

The awards will be presented in October at a celebration wrapping up a year-long observance of the San Francisco Foundation's 50th anniversary. The foundation is giving out the awards in hopes that they will inspire even more community involvement.

Nominations are due by April 15. Individuals and nonprofit groups in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties only will be considered. Nomination forms are available by calling the foundation at 495-3100 or 510-436-3100.

Mayor Brown Reads Aloud

Two Noe Valley schools — Alvarado Elementary and James Lick Middle School—will participate in the fourth annual Read Aloud Day on Thursday, March 12. Sponsored by the Bay Area Book Council, Read Aloud Day is designed to encourage parents to read aloud to their kids—and to help kids learn to love reading. The libraries at Alvarado and James Lick will each have a special program on March 12 for their students.

That same day, Mayor Willie Brown will read aloud to kids at the San Francisco Main Library in the Children's Room at 10 a.m. Throughout the Bay Area, authors, illustrators, and community leaders will read aloud to more than 10,000 kids in schools, libraries, and bookstores. For more information, call the San Francisco Bay Area Book Council at 908-2833.

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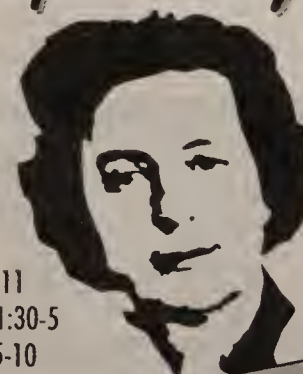
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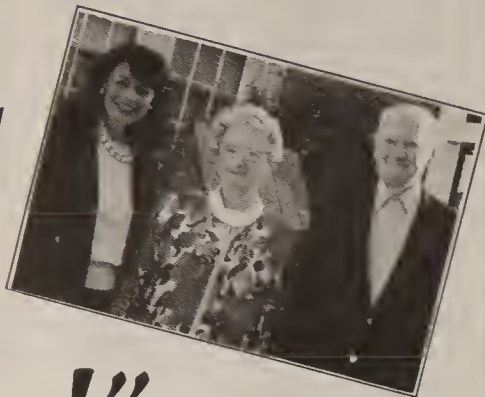


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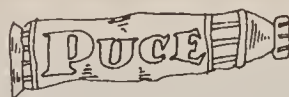


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Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, and fewer than 1,500 words for the Last Page; 800 for Bylines. The address is Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Don't forget to enclose a SASE. And please include a phone number.

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St. Patrick's Day: Where's The Beef?

By Erin O'Briant

If you read my byline, you'll see why the *Voice* editors couldn't resist assigning me to find out what's going on in Noe Valley for St. Patrick's Day. After all, I am—according to my grandmother—a direct descendant of the old snake chaser himself (Ireland's Patron Saint Patrick, who lived from 389 to 461 A.D.).

Well, you won't have any trouble celebrating St. Pat's around here. If you're looking for some good Irish food, look no further. Star Bakery at 1701 Church St. is baking its legendary Irish soda bread, and maybe some shamrock cookies as well. And starting the weekend before St. Patrick's Day—which falls on Tuesday, March 17—the stewpots of Noe Valley will be full to overflowing with corned beef and cabbage.

On Saturday, March 14, St. Paul's at Church and Valley streets will sponsor a dinner hosted by the church's men's club. The dinner will feature—what else?—corned beef and cabbage. "It is delicious," says Gladys Lazzarini of St. Paul's. "The men have it down to a science. It sure tastes better when you don't have to cook it yourself!" Lazzarini says this year's celebration will be held at St. John's Church at 4856 Mission St., because St. Paul's auditorium is currently under construction. Doors open at 6 p.m. and dinner starts at 7 p.m. There will be live music. However, dancing may be limited due to lack of space. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 13; kids 2 and younger get in free. You can purchase tickets at St. Paul's after mass starting March 1, or by calling 648-7538.

Meanwhile, St. Philip's Church at Diamond and 24th is also staging a St. Pat's dinner and party on March 14. The event will feature a home-cooked meal of corned beef and cabbage, plus the services of a no-host bar. Pat Gibney will play traditional Irish folk music, and two Irish dance troupes will entertain the crowd. The party kicks off at 6:30 p.m., with dinner served from 7:30 to 8:30. Music and dancing will continue until 12:30. Admission is \$18 per person. The event will be held at the church at 725 Diamond St. For tickets call St. Philip's, 282-0141.

Local bars will also be wearing the green on St. Patrick's Day. The Peaks at 1316 Castro St. (near 24th) and the Dubliner at 3838 24th St. (near Vicksburg) will be open at the top o' the morning March 17, serving free corned beef and cabbage for as long as it lasts. The Peaks will also offer a discount on Guinness beer—and lucky revelers there may get to hear a spontaneous tune from Irish tenor Johnny Foley. The Dubliner, with perhaps the largest "blarney stone" in the neighborhood, also stands to attract big crowds, including bagpipers and dancers doing those famous Irish jigs.

Up the street at the Rover's Inn (4026 24th St.), the celebrating starts at 10 a.m., with free corned beef and specials on Guinness and Irish coffee.

Over at O'Greenberg's at 1600 Dolores (near 29th), the St. Pat's party gets going at 1 p.m. But this local tavern will spotlight its Jewish-Irish heritage—and put a unique spin on tradition—by serving corned beef and bagels.

One thing you're likely to hear at all the bars on St. Patrick's Day is the slogan "Erin go bragh!" That's Gaelic for "Ireland forever!" and Irish patriots just love to shout it out. Inevitably, a few smart alecks will tease me with their own version: "Erin go braless!"

Go ahead, have your laugh. I'm too busy eating corned beef and cabbage. □

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IN PRAISE OF GUINNESS

By Frank Holt

The French are so proud of their Champs-Élysées,
Where madames so fragrant stroll by every day.

The Russians drink vodka to banish the cold,
While Lenin's fair dream still fails to unfold.

The Dutch have their red-lights and windmills so grand,
In Spain they've their bullfights and miles of fine sand.

The Yanks have their White House where freedom resides,
With billions of dollars it expertly hides.

The Welsh have their poets who sometimes dig coal,
And fervently sing through their heart and their soul.

The Scots have their Loch Ness with monster unseen,
And whiskey so smooth that it tastes like a dream.

For the Brits it's nice tea served in china so fine,
And cricket on Sunday is simply divine.

Dear friends I concede that your treasures are grand.
But there's one precious jewel that still leads the band.

For in Dublin there's a beauty that just has no match,
'Tis brewed near St. James', then thrown down the hatch.

Poet Frank Holt has lived in Noe Valley for 10 years, but still has strong ties to his native Ireland. He wrote the above verses "in Dublin about 20 years ago. But since it's my humble intention to incorporate both truth and humor, I did change two lines recently—the ones about the U.S."

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NOW: James Lick Middle School needs VOLUNTEER tutors and teachers' assistants. Call Rachel Weinstein at 695-5675, ext. 3112.

MARCH 2-20: Artist ANTHONY TONEY exhibits a seven-decade retrospective of his paintings. Mon.-Fri., 10 am-3 pm; also Tues. & Thurs., 6-8 pm. Visual Arts Building, City College, 50 Phelan Ave. 239-3157.

MARCH 3: James Lick's 1998 FAMILY LITERACY Night features a poetry slam. 6:30-8 pm. Bayview Opera House, 4705 Third St. 695-5675 ext. 3112.

MARCH 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31: The Noe Valley Library offers STORY TIME for preschoolers 3 to 5. 10 am. 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

MARCH 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31: Lauren Coleman's JAZZ MOVES class continues Tuesdays, 6 to 7:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2782.

MARCH 4: The Adventist HEALTHVAV offers blood pressure checks at Bell Market. 10 am-4 pm. 775-2570.

MARCH 4-7: The KRONOS QUARTET celebrates its 25th anniversary with a concert at Theater Artaud. 8 pm. 450 Florida St. 621-7797.

MARCH 4-28: Gallery Luscombe exhibits the work of four artists in "PAINTERS IN PARADISE." Reception March 7, 3-6 pm. Wed.-Sat., noon-5 pm. 3040 24th St. 285-8545.

MARCH 4, 11, 18 & 25: The Noe Valley Library hosts a LAPSIT for infants, toddlers, and their parents. 7 pm. 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

MARCH 4, 11, 18 & 25: Watch your P's and Q's at the Bernal Heights Library's SCRABBLE NIGHT. 7:15 pm. 500 Cortland St. 695-5160.

MARCH 5: STORYTELLER Patricia Bulitt entertains kids at 11 am. Excelsior Library, 4400 Mission St. 337-4735.

MARCH 5: The Main Library sponsors a TEEN TALENT SHOW at 5 pm. Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin St. 557-4276.

MARCH 5: DOUG DOWD continues his "Critical Analysis of Capitalism and Economics." 7 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

MARCH 5: Cha cha cha to Bart and Judy Lewis's six-week BALLROOM DANCE classes for beginning and intermediate adult couples. 7:30 basic, 8:30 intermediate. Commodore Sloat School, Ocean Ave. & Junipero Serra. 661-2746.

MARCH 5-21: The Holy Theatre performs a tribal version of SOPHOCLES' *Antigone*. Thurs.-Sat., 7:30 pm; Sat. & Sun., 2 pm. Yugen/Noh Space, 2840 Mariposa St. 621-7797.

MARCH 5-28: The Carmichael Galley exhibits PAINTINGS by Leigh Barbier and Matt Jervis. Reception March 5, 7 pm. 3491 19th St. 641-8042.

MARCH 5, 12, 19 & 26: TAX HELP is available for low- and moderate-income seniors through AARP volunteers. 9 am-1 pm. Diamond Senior Center, 117 Diamond St. 863-3507.

MARCH 6: John Jackson introduces a new Detective Sergeant Mulheisen MYSTERY, *Man with an Ax*. 5-6 pm. The San Francisco Mystery Bookstore, 4175 24th St. 282-7444.

MARCH 7: A NOE TENANTS meeting, sponsored by the S.F. Tenants Union, discusses landlord problems, rent control, the housing crisis, and ways to fight back. Noon. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 282-5525.

MARCH 7: Make SEA OTTER puppets and learn about their habits at the Randall Museum. Ages 5 and up (under 8 with parent). 1 pm. 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.



A Band of Angels featuring British finger-style guitarist Martin Simpson will play "avant-folk" music at the Noe Valley Music Series March 7.

MARCH 7: British GUITARIST Martin Simpson and his Band of Angels perform the celestial music of many cultures and eras. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

MARCH 7 & 8: The Community Music Center Orchestra and winners of the 1998 Concerto Competition perform a CONCERTO CONCERT with pianist Rozalina Gutman. Sat., 4 pm; Sun., 7 pm. 544 Capp St. 647-6015.

MARCH 7: New Dawn YOGA THERAPY features inverted poses. 2-6 pm. Center for Movement Education, 98 Chenery St. 285-1831.

MARCH 7, 10, 21 & 24: The SPCA offers TRAINING for dog walkers, cat socializers, and adoption counselors. Sat., 10 am-noon; Tues., 5-7 pm. 243 Alabama St. Call 554-3087 for info.

MARCH 8: PFLAG screens and discusses a film, *It's Elementary*, about gay issues in schools. 2-4 pm. St. Francis Church, 152 Church St. 921-8850.

MARCH 8: The Blaker Bande, with Frances Blaker on recorder, Barbara Blaker Krumdieck on baroque cello, and Hanneke van Proosdij on harpsichord, plays music by Buxtehude, Corelli, and Purcell at Chattanooga CHAMBER MUSIC. 3 pm. 152 Chattanooga St. Call 641-0940 for reservations.

MARCH 8: Noe Valley Ministry offers TAIZE: chanting, meditation, and prayer. 7 pm. 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

MARCH 10: Celebrate the 3300 Club's 40th anniversary and IRISH POETRY night with readings by J.R. Brady, Jon Greene, Frank Holt, Joe Kelly, and Nancy Keane. 7 pm. Keane's 3300 Club, 3300 Mission St. 333-3494.

MARCH 10: Mariah Burton Nelson, author of *The Stronger Women Get*, *The More Men Love Football*, discusses her book about women and competition, *Embracing Victory*. 7:30 pm. Modern Times, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

MARCH 12: St. Paul's Young at Heart senior group hosts a St. Patrick's LUNCHEON from 1-4 pm. Rectory dining room, 221 Valley St. Call Alyce Murphy at 824-4655 to reserve a spot.

MARCH 14: Al Geto gives a dramatic reading of IRISH STORIES. 2 pm. Glen Park Library, 653 Chenery St. 337-4740.

MARCH 14: Ragazzi, the Peninsula BOYS CHORUS, joins the chorus of Lick-Wilmerding High School in a Mozart concert. 7:30 pm. St. Agnes Church, 1025 Masonic Ave. 342-8785.

MARCH 14: The ÑA CHALIS OPERA Ensemble performs a fully staged production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. 8 pm. Community Music Center, 544 Capp St. 647-6015.

MARCH 14: The SCREAMING DIVAS sing "Aberrant Acapella" with Celtic Elvis. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

MARCH 14, 15 & 22: CHANTICLEER gives a concert relating to St. Cecilia, featuring chants for virgin martyrs. Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 7 pm. Mission Dolores Basilica, Dolores at 16th St. 392-4400.

MARCH 14, 21 & 28: Barbara Ellen Vos offers therapeutic SWEDISH MASSAGE in her new Noe Valley office. Call 552-4410 for appointment.

MARCH 15: Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC presents the Cypress String Quartet performing music by Beethoven, Dvorak, and Bartok. 2 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 333-9444.

MARCH 15: MYSTERY writer Rochelle Krich's signs her seventh novel, dealing with fertility issues. 3-4 pm. The San Francisco Mystery Bookstore, 4175 24th St. 282-7444.

MARCH 15: Natural Resources offers a class for PARENTS with new babies, "Introduction to Solid Foods." 3-5 pm. 1307 Castro St. 550-2611.



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St. Patrick's Day

CALENDAR

MARCH 15 & 22: Ira Levin and Simon Kaplan perform their original MUSICAL *The Plant's Taking Over* at the Marsh's Growing Stage. 11:30- am & 1:30 pm. 1062 Valencia St. 826-5750.

MARCH 16: Integral Yoga Institute offers a six-week course in the scriptures of the BHAGAVAD GITA, taught by Kamala Lee. 6-7:30 pm. 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

MARCH 17-MAY 2: The Gallery at 17 Reasons features paintings and sculpture by Harvey Peterson, "FOLK FIGURES: Friends and Acquaintances." Mon.-Sat., 11 am-7 pm; Sun., noon-6 pm. 3961 24th St. 206-1717.

MARCH 18: Songwriter Lisa Atkinson performs a WOMEN'S HISTORY tribute for all ages. 7 pm. Glen Park Library, 653 Chenery St. 337-4740.

MARCH 19: Shanti holds a BOOK BROWSING and Give Away Day for people with HIV/AIDS. 1-4 pm. 1546 Market St. 487-4743.

MARCH 19: The Mission Library offers a RUBBER STAMPING extravaganza for kids 4 and older. 4 pm. 2601 Mission St. 695-5090.

MARCH 19: Jamestown Community Center's second annual JAMESTOWN JAM features Dr. Loco and his Rockin' Jalapeno Band. 8 pm-1 am. Transmission Theater, 308 11th St. 647-4709.

MARCH 19-22: The Lowell High School Drama Department performs a Leonard Bernstein MUSICAL, *Wonderful Town*. Thurs.-Sat., 7:30 pm; Sun., 2 pm. Carol Channing Theater, 1101 Eucalyptus Drive. 759-2730.

MARCH 19-APRIL 18: RHODESSA JONES portrays jazz legend Alberta Hunter in *My Castle's Rockin'*. Wed.-Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 7 pm. Theatre Rhinoceros, 861-5079.



The Cypress String Quartet will perform at the Sunday afternoon classical music series at the Noe Valley Ministry on March 15, 2 pm.

MARCH 20: High schoolers are invited to the Randall Museum's Cine/Club screening of Volker Schlöndorff's film, *The Tin Drum*. 7 pm. 199 Museum Way, 864-2026.

MARCH 21: The Marsh's Growing Stage offers eight-week children's DRAMA classes for kindergarten through fifth-graders (in two sections). 1062 Valencia St. Call 826-5750, ext. 2.

MARCH 21: Architectural historian Judith Lynch discusses "San Francisco's VICTORIANS" from 10 am-3 pm. The Haas-Lilienthal House, 2007 Franklin St. 441-3000.

MARCH 21: West Portal Library hosts a KIDS' program with Too Too Tomato. 11 am. 190 Lenox Way, 753-7135.

MARCH 21: The San Francisco Mystery Bookstore welcomes Edgar winner Michael Connelly, signing *Blood Work*, the latest in his Harry Bosch series, 2 to 3 pm. Authors Domenic Stansberry (*The Last Days of Il Duce*) and Joyce Spizer (*The Cop Was White as Snow*) pick up the pen from 3 to 4 pm. 4175 24th St. 282-7444.

MARCH 21: The SPCA hosts a class on DOG AGGRESSION from 3 to 5 pm. Please don't bring your dog. 2500 16th St. Call 554-3085 to register.

MARCH 21: Wind in the Willows Preschool hosts an ALUMNI REUNION party and auction at a South of Market photography studio. 7 pm. Call 285-5510 for reservations.

MARCH 21: The San Francisco KLEZMER EXPERIENCE is back by popular demand. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

MARCH 22: The San Francisco Children's Chorus, the SINGING RAINBOW Youth Ensemble, and soprano Michelle Diaz perform a "Sing Into Spring" concert. 3 pm. Community Music Center, 544 Capp St. 647-6015.

MARCH 24: Keane's 3300 Club hosts a LIMERICK CONTEST and poetry open mike. 7 pm. 3300 Mission St. Preregister for a featured spot at 333-3494.

MARCH 25-29: The London-based Blue Delta DANCE Company makes its North American debut at Theater Artaud. Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 7 pm. 450 Florida St. 621-7797.

MARCH 26: The Noe Valley Library shows FILMS for kids 3 to 5 at 10 and 11 am. 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

MARCH 27: Rupali performs music composed by SRI CHINMOY. 7:30-9 pm. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

MARCH 27: Stellamara combines EASTERN EUROPEAN VOCALS with trance and world music. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

MARCH 27-APRIL 11: Everyman Theater Company performs SHAKE-SPEARE'S *The Winter's Tale*. Thurs.-Sat., 7:30 pm. The Noh Space, 2840 Mariposa St. 621-7978.

MARCH 28: Rent a table at James Lick Middle School's FLEA MARKET and benefit the band and P.E. departments. 8 am-3 pm. For details call Brian Charron at 282-1864.

MARCH 28: The Older Women's League, OWL, hosts a PANEL DISCUSSION with two pharmacists discussing medications, herbals, and dietary supplements. 9:30 am-12:30 pm; register at 9 am. U. of C. Health Sciences West Building, Room 303 (enter through 513 Parnassus Ave.). 989-4422.

MARCH 28: Make KALEIDOSCOPES with Julie Dodd Tetzlaff at the Randall Museum. 1 pm. 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.

It's Almost April, You Fools

The next *Voice* will be the April 1998 issue, due out Wednesday, April 1. If you'd like to publicize an upcoming event, send us your announcement quick: The deadline for Calendar items is **March 15**. (Yes, it's a short month—sorry.)

The address is *Noe Valley Voice* Calendar, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or you can e-mail us at jaxvoice@aol.com.

If you have questions or last-minute changes, call Calendar Editor Karol Barske at 285-6347. □

MARCH 28: Artists' Television Access offers a class, "INTERNET for the Overwhelmed." 4-7 pm. 992 Valencia St. 824-3890.

MARCH 28: The Noe Valley Music Series hosts International GUITAR NIGHT, with Brian Gore, Danny Heines, and others. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

MARCH 28-31: The Golden Gate MEN'S CHORUS performs "Tour de France" at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. Sat. & Tues., 8 pm; Sun., 6 pm. 3281 16th St. 476-5153.

MARCH 30: Buy me some peanuts and crackerjack, I don't care if I never get back: the San Francisco GIANTS BASEBALL season begins!

MARCH 31: Leslie Simon and Jan Johnson Drantell examine CHILDHOOD BEREAVEMENT in *A Music I No Longer Heard*. 7:30 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

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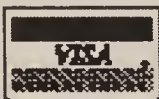
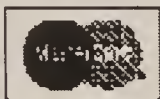
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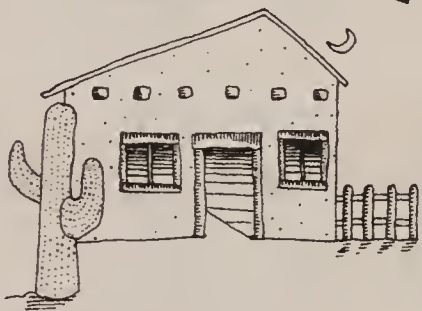
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Introducing **Sasha the Spitz**. Reader **Jeanne Lassen** sent the *Voice* this photo of a canine with a different perspective. "It's an easy bounce," she writes, "from the deck of his house to the roof next door, where he keeps us all safe by barking at the streetsweeper, the garbage truck, the recycling truck, and other interlopers on his turf."



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'Highly Sensitive' Author Finds Refuge in Noe

By Kathy Dalle-Molle

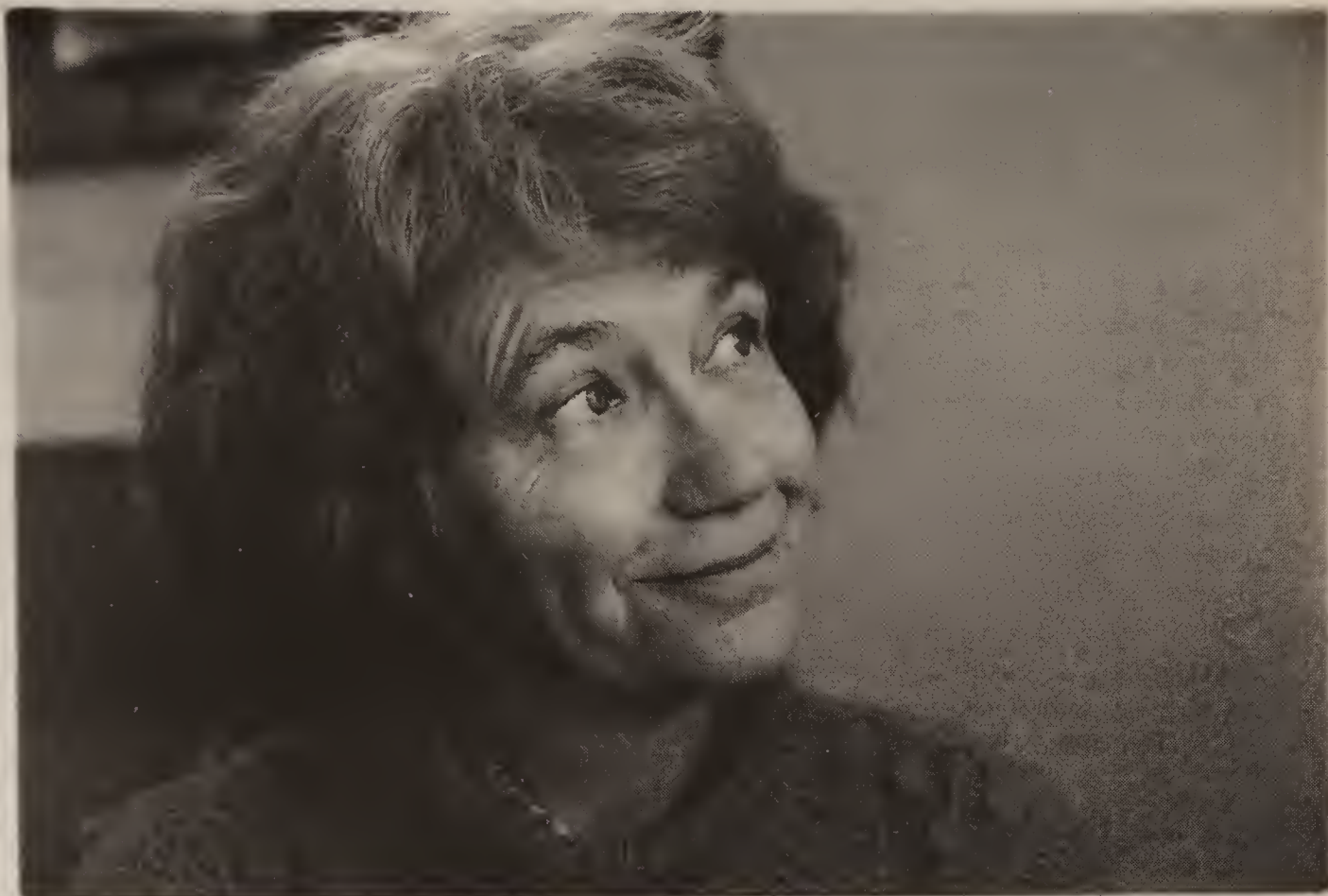
Elaine Aron arrives at our interview fresh from a late-morning ocean swim at the Dolphin Club. The Jungian psychologist tries to start most days with meditation, followed by a bracing dip in the sea.

But lately, it's been hard for Aron to stick to her normal routine. Since the paperback edition of her bestseller *The Highly Sensitive Person: How to Thrive When the World Overwhelms You* was published last summer, she's been on the road more often than not, promoting the book at lectures and readings while still tending her burgeoning psychology practice, which she operates out of an office at 24th and Castro.

The day before our interview, she returned to her Eureka Valley Victorian from El Paso, Texas, in the morning and saw six patients in the afternoon. That's how the last several months have gone. If it's Sunday or Monday, she's in Noe Valley. If it's Tuesday, she's driving to Santa Cruz to see patients there. On Wednesday she's back in Noe Valley. Then on Thursday she's on her way to Phoenix, St. Paul, or Any City, USA.

"It's been draining," says Aron, 53, "because I have a full practice and a newsletter [called "Comfort Zone: The HSP Newsletter"], and the publisher wants to see a proposal for my next book [on temperament and relationships]."

That schedule would be tough on anybody, but it's a real stretch for someone



Writer and psychologist Elaine Aron, who has an office at 24th and Castro, says Noe Valley is a magnet for sensitive people because "people in this neighborhood are very understanding. I can't think of a better area" for sensitive city dwellers to live in. Photo by Beverly Thorp

who bears the genetic trait for "high sensitivity," like Aron does. She says scientists now estimate that 20 percent of the population may be born highly sensitive—more cautious and discerning than others.

According to Aron, these highly sensitive people, or "HSPs," as she calls them, "process incoming information from their five senses differently, more carefully. And they like to reflect on things. These two differences tend to make them intuitive, creative, conscientious, and concerned about others."

Highly sensitive people also may grow up to be great artists and thinkers.

That's the good news.

"The not-so-good news," says Aron, "is that we are more easily overwhelmed. When the noise or stuff going on is about right or interesting for others, it may be too much for us. I think the classic example is when an HSP is out with friends, he or she wants the volume down on the radio in the car. Another example involves an HSP spending the day with friends shopping or at the museum. When the day is done, the HSP wants to go home and be quiet and go to bed—they've had enough—but their friends want to go out to a nightclub or to a movie."

In writing *The Highly Sensitive Person*, Aron drew from her surveys, interviews, and clinical experience to devise a self-assessment test (see sidebar). In the book, she tackles problems that sensitive people commonly face, such as anxiety and depression, as well as the challenges they may encounter in their personal relationships and at the workplace.

"Being born highly sensitive doesn't mean you're automatically neurotic, anxious, unhappy, submissive, or lacking in confidence," says Aron. "However, you may be a little more prone to these sorts of difficulties."

But the reasons sensitive people are likely to feel depressed or seek therapy may have more to do with how the world treats them than with any inherent weakness, she says. "First, in this culture, the [highly sensitive] trait is not the ideal. We admire boldness and toughness and outgoingness, especially for males [Aron notes that just as many men as women are born with the trait]. So even the most well-meaning parents and teachers are trying to help HSPs by telling them 'Don't be so sensitive' and 'Don't be so shy.' That makes it hard to grow up feeling good about yourself.

"Second, HSPs can be a little more prone than others to being anxious or depressed if they've had a troubled childhood or if their other life experiences have not been so hot." In other words, if you start out with a sensitive temperament and then have a stroke of bad luck, such as the loss of a parent, "it can be sort of a double-whammy," Aron says.

Since high sensitivity is frowned upon by the majority of today's population, doctors and therapists often look for a "cure."

"When my family doctor heard what I was going to write about, he said, 'Oh, tell

your audience that we've got a cure for this. Just give them antidepressants.'"

But drugs may be totally unnecessary. Aron points out that many HSPs excel as writers, teachers, scientists, and philosophers. Abraham Lincoln, Carl Jung, Emily Dickinson, and Jimmy Carter are a few examples.

"I suspect that Jimmy Carter was our last HSP president," she ventures. "He is a creative person, and he tended to be quite serious and conscientious in office. He didn't feel like a sensation seeker, which I think Bill Clinton is right now. Clinton is a good example of somebody who's almost driven to be in the limelight."

Aron stresses that it's important for HSPs to not see themselves as having a tragic flaw. She also acknowledges that it can be a struggle to train yourself to look at the bright side. In fact, as she explains in her book, it took her 25 years.

"As a child, at home, I hid from the chaos in my family," she writes. "At school, I avoided sports, games, and kids in general. What a mixture of relief and humiliation when my strategy succeeded and I was totally ignored."

By her early 20s, after a brief marriage and graduation with honors from U.C. Berkeley, Aron entered graduate school. "I was provided with an office to which I retreated and cried, trying to regain some calm," she writes. "Because of such reactions, I stopped my studies with a master's degree, even though I was highly encouraged to continue for a doctorate.... It took 25 years for me to gain the information...to understand my reactions and complete the doctorate."

"When I was 23, I met my current husband and settled down into a very protected life of writing and rearing a son. I was simultaneously delighted and ashamed of not being 'out there.' I was vaguely aware of my lost opportunities to learn, to enjoy more public recognition of my abilities, to be more connected with all kinds of people. But...I thought I had no choice."

Finally, there came a turning point. "I had to undergo a medical procedure from which I assumed I would recover in a few weeks," she writes. "Instead, for months my body seemed to resound with physical and emotional reactions.... So I tried some psychotherapy. And got lucky. After listening to me for a few sessions, my therapist said, 'But of course you were

Continued on Next Page

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Sensitive People Need Peace and Quiet

Continued from Previous Page

upset; you are a very highly sensitive person.' To her, such sensitivity was hardly a sign of a mental flaw or disorder."

Still, even today, despite having authored a book on the subject, Aron often wants to forget that she's sensitive.

"I always laugh that if I'd seen my book at a bookstore, but not written it, I would not think I was an HSP," she admits. "Some sensitive people are in a lot of denial about it, and I think that's a big issue for me. It's so difficult for many sensitive people to slow down and live the way they're supposed to and not violate their own operating instructions. That's been a constant task for me. I can advise other people, but I have a hard time doing what I advise them for myself. I'm still absorbing it."

If you're one of those who's sensitive and you start to feel overwhelmed, Aron counsels that you stay away from activities that are too distracting.

"Avoid TV and radio," she says, "because they can be overstimulating. Also, avoid violent movies, and stay away from crowds. If you're at a party or event and start to feel overstimulated, just walk out if possible."

Sensitive people should also maintain a regular routine and set aside time to relax every day, she advises. "Walks in nature, meditation, yoga, spending time near trees and water, reading a book — these are the types of down-time activities that help HSPs cope."

Although 80,000 copies of *The Highly Sensitive Person* are currently in print, Aron's success has not come quickly or easily. Her agent spent two years in search of a publisher. Then when she found one, the publisher set an initial print run of only 6,000 hardcover copies. It also provided very little publicity. Even now,

Aron says, there has been little national press attention for her book.

"I think the media see it as too narrow a topic — or maybe it's just not a very glamorous-sounding topic," she laughs.

Still, Aron's book has garnered enough attention in the Bay Area to earn a spot for 19 weeks on the *Chronicle's* bestseller list, including five weeks at number one.

"I could probably say more HSPs are in the Bay Area than practically anywhere in the United States," says Aron, "and I think absolutely that Noe Valley attracts HSPs. I can't think of a better area for sensitive people to live close to."

"HSPs are often attracted to urban environments because of the arts and culture. Or they may be involved in those fields," she continues. "So if you want to get ahead with your ideas, an urban area is a good place to be. But then you have to find within that urban environment some place that is as 'un-urban' as possible, and Noe Valley is a unique place in this city. It's still a neighborhood. There's a feeling of community, that people want to support you in whatever you're trying to do, whether it's getting an apartment or starting a small business. People in this neighborhood are very understanding."

Plus, Noe Valley offers several soothing places for HSPs to relax.

"I love the top of Kite Hill [at Corwin and 19th]," Aron says. "It's absolutely peaceful. I think another reason Noe Valley is popular with HSPs is that people have back yards here more than in other parts of the city."

"Another place I really love is Holy Innocents Church on Fair Oaks," she adds. "They have those beautiful gardens, and the church itself is beautiful. The natural light, the fountain. It's just a lovely place."

Still, Aron says, no place beats the ocean and getting under the covers.

"Paddling around in the water," she says, "and lying around in bed are the two most wonderful places for me." □



Are You Highly Sensitive?

A SELF-TEST

Answer each question according to the way you feel. Circle **T** for true if the statement is at least somewhat true for you. Circle **F** for false if it is not very true or not at all true for you.

I seem to be aware of subtleties in my environment. **T F**

Other people's moods affect me. **T F**

I tend to be very sensitive to pain. **T F**

I find myself needing to withdraw during busy days, into bed or into a darkened room or any place where I can have some privacy and relief from stimulation. **T F**

I am particularly sensitive to the effects of caffeine. **T F**

I am easily overwhelmed by things like bright lights, strong smells, coarse fabrics, or sirens close by. **T F**

I have a rich, complex inner life. **T F**

I am made uncomfortable by loud noises. **T F**

I am deeply moved by the arts or music. **T F**

I am conscientious. **T F**

I startle easily. **T F**

I get rattled when I have a lot to do in a short amount of time. **T F**

When people are uncomfortable in a physical environment, I tend to know what needs to be done to make it more

comfortable (like changing the lighting or the seating). **T F**

I am annoyed when people try to get me to do too many things at once. **T F**

I try hard to avoid making mistakes or forgetting things. **T F**

I make it a point to avoid violent movies and TV shows. **T F**

I become unpleasantly aroused when a lot is going on around me. **T F**

Being very hungry creates a strong reaction in me, disrupting my concentration or mood. **T F**

Changes in my life shake me up. **T F**

I notice and enjoy delicate or fine scents, tastes, sounds, works of art. **T F**

I make it a high priority to arrange my life to avoid upsetting or overwhelming situations. **T F**

When I must compete or be observed while performing a task, I become so nervous or shaky that I do much worse than I would do otherwise. **T F**

When I was a child, my parents or teachers seemed to see me as sensitive or shy. **T F**

SCORING YOURSELF

If you answered true to 12 or more of the questions, you're probably highly sensitive. But frankly, no psychological test is so accurate that you should base your life on it. If only one or two of the questions are true of you but they are *extremely* true, you might also be justified in calling yourself highly sensitive.

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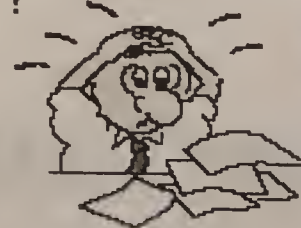
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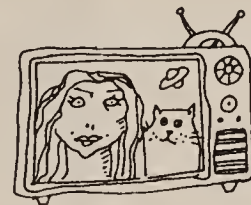
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For Connie Walkershaw, Life Is Just Go Van Gogh

By Maire Farrington

Connie Walkershaw, 37, still gets stopped on the street by fans who recognize her from her former band, Jungle Dinner. But most people know her as the alto and soprano saxophonist for Go Van Gogh, the band she started in 1992 with her husband, bassist Jesse Walkershaw, 41.

Hitting on a catchy name for their new band was no problem. "We have always loved Van Gogh's paintings, and in the first few years of our career we always used them for our flyers," says Connie. "Jesse and I were playing around with names for the band, and he came up with Go Van Gogh."

But describing the band's musical style—that's another story. "We'll approach a jazz club and they'll say, 'You're not jazz.' Then we'll approach a rock club and they'll say, 'You're a jazz band,'" Connie says. "I'm sure that's what our drummer, Kelvin Burton, thinks—that we're just some weird kind of jazz band. For a while we were calling it 'gypsy jazz,' and then our former violinist, Kate Regan, coined the phrase 'gypsies on acid jazz.'"

"But then there's the funk element," she continues. "And our tenor player, Jamison Smeltz, came in the other day with this great revelation: 'We are a rock band. We rock!'"

"If that works for him, okay. But if he starts telling me we're a rhythm and blues band, I'm going to be really upset," she jokes. Her own biggest musical influences—and she's the leader of the band—are John Coltrane and "loads of Middle Eastern and ethnic music."

In any case, the five-member Go Van Gogh—featuring two "sinuous" saxophones, violin, bass, and drums—wowed Noe Valley last October when it teamed up with the klezmer group Davka for a hot concert at the Noe Valley Ministry on Sanchez Street.

For Connie, who was born and raised in Noe Valley, performing at the Ministry brought back many happy memories of her old stomping grounds. "It was a great place to grow up," she recalls. "We had a lot of freedom. We felt very safe."

"My grandfather [Trent Karpus] owned a house on 23rd Street and lived there nearly 45 years. When I was 12, we moved in with him for a year and a half while our house on 28th Street was being renovated after it burned down." In the early 1950s, she adds, "My mother and grandmother, Muriel Karpus, used to go folk dancing on Friday nights at the Noe Valley Ministry [then the Lebanon Presbyterian Church]. There was a whole group of families that would get together."

As for the 24th Street shopping strip, says Connie, "It's kind of sad that all the



The jazz/rock/klezmer band Go Van Gogh—composed of (l. to r.) Jamison Smeltz on sax, Kelvin Burton on drums, leader Connie Walkershaw, also on sax, Flavia Cervino on violin, and Jesse Walkershaw on bass—has artistic roots in the neighborhood. Photo by Beverly Thorp

businesses I knew are gone. My mother used to go to the movies where Bell Market is now.... But every once in a while I'll walk down the street and see somebody who used to work at the dime store [Glen 5 & 10] when I was a kid, and that kind of makes you feel good. My grandfather used to always sit in the same seat at Herb's diner, and I'd go in and have a donut with him. Whenever I walk by there, I look in and see his shadow."

Connie spent her childhood surrounded by music. Her mother, Kay Walker, was a singer. Her sister, Pamela Walker, played clarinet as part of a classical quintet. And her father, T. Michael Walker, "played all kinds of instruments," Connie says. "He was a bass player,

drummer, and piano player, and then he went on a trip around the world and brought back a bouzouki—an eight-stringed, long-necked instrument with a big, gourd-like body. He used to play Greek and Turkish folk songs, and now he's in a jazz band [The English Professors in Santa Cruz]. We still jam together, but now he wants to play *Girl from Ipanema*," she quips.

By age 11, Connie was playing flute with her dad's band, which provided backup music for belly dancers. At 18, she was considering going to fashion design school. "But then it dawned on me that what I really wanted to do was play music. So I bought my saxophone."

In 1982, some mutual friends intro-

duced her to Jesse Walkershaw, a bass player in search of a saxophonist. That same year, the two formed a band called Jungle Dinner, made up of "two saxophones, a bass, drums, and vocals, so it was really not so dissimilar from what we have right now," Connie says.

Jungle Dinner disbanded in 1984, and in 1985 Connie and Jesse got married, then set out with their drummer to find adventure in Europe. "We were very young, and we thought we had it all set up, but it was kind of a disaster," Connie recounts. The trio arrived in Amsterdam only to find that their apartment deal had fallen through. "We ended up buying a van and driving to Belgium where we had friends. But we had no papers, so it was hard to get work. And our drummer was definitely not happy there."

After further travels, Connie and Jesse returned to San Francisco in 1986. Two years later they moved to the Big Apple. There they formed another trio and played the nightclub scene for three years. "But the quality of life was too rushed, and we found that we weren't doing as much with the music there as we had been here," says Connie, "so we decided to come home." She, Jesse, and their 3-year-old daughter Carmen currently live on Church Street near Market.

"It's much more satisfying here," she says. "After about a year and a half, I found myself thinking, I love it here. Why would I want to live anywhere else? But I had to leave and then come back to find that out."

Since the birth of Go Van Gogh six years ago, the band has played more than a hundred gigs at Bay Area clubs and concert halls, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The group has also recorded two CDs, *Go Van Gogh* and *One*, due out this month. Both can be found at Streetlight Records on 24th Street.

Connie composes about two-thirds of the songs—all of which are instrumental—but she and Jesse and the other band members collaborate on many of the tunes through improvisation. All of the band's music is original, and these days their sound is a unique blend. "Jesse has a phrase for it: 'snaking grooves, smoldering eastern modes slammed up against jazzy western lines,'" Connie points out.

When not writing or playing, Connie is either chasing her toddler or following another of her longtime interests: fashion. She designs and produces her own line of clothing for women—Walkershaw Clothing—specializing in coats, jumpers, and jackets. "They are classic women's

Continued on Page 36

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Go Van Gogh

Continued from Page 35

clothes with a twist. At first glance it looks like '40s clothing, but then if you look closer," you'll see her modern touch, she says. Working from a small sewing room in her apartment, Connie makes all the clothes herself. Her creations can be found in boutiques such as Uko on Union Street and Bella Donna on Hayes Street.

She's the first to admit that her revolving roles as musician, designer, wife, and mother can be dizzying. "Sometimes one thing will take off more than the other," she says. "We'll have five gigs in a row. Then the next month we'll have none. But you just deal with what's going on and know that it will balance out in the end."

As for the challenge of living and working with one's spouse, Connie says flexibility and friendship are the key. "Jesse and I were band mates for many years before we got involved romantically, so that kind of set the tone," she reflects. "We also became close as best friends. We know how to argue and leave

it at the door. The most difficult thing at this point is that we're both doing this band and have a child. So now we rely on Grandma. [Thank goodness] she's ever ready and happy to take care of Carmen."

Though their daughter doesn't accompany her parents on the nightclub circuit, Carmen can already bang out a few notes on the piano and has started to play around with the flute. She also has her own toy saxophone.

"The other night we went to our friends' to play, and Carmen brought her saxophone and announced, 'This is my first gig,'" Connie relates. After joining in with Mom and Dad, Carmen played a solo on Mom's saxophone. "She's really good. I move the fingers, and she blows. That was probably the cutest gig I ever had," Connie says with a smile. □

If you'd like to see some live Go Van Gogh, mark your calendars for Friday, May 29, when the band will again play the Noe Valley Ministry. (Call 282-2317 for time and ticket information.) For other performance updates, check out the band's web site at www.govangogh.net.

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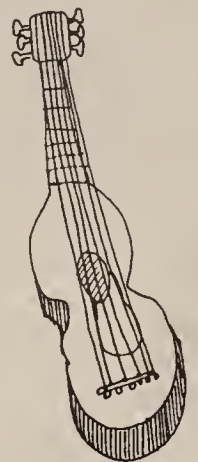
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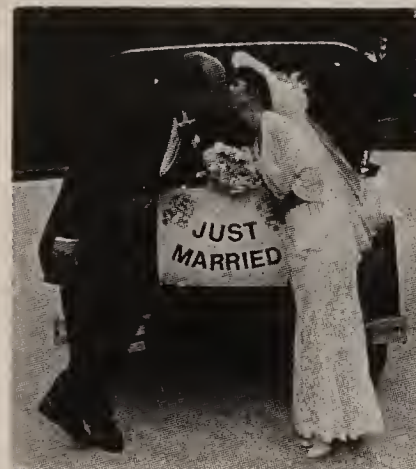
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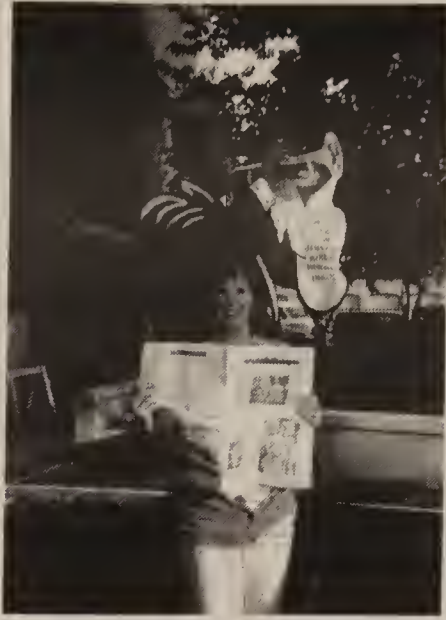
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Jersey Street resident **Rose O'Leary** checked out New Orleans last fall, and posed in the shadow of a Louis Armstrong caricature with her favorite hometown rag.



Nine-year-old **Sarah Burns**, daughter of **Ellen and Michael**, felt like someone was reading over her shoulder during the family's Mexican vacation earlier this winter.



Few may recall that it was globe hopper (and Voice photo editor) **Charles Kennard** who started taking pictures of people reading the Voice in faraway places. From Peru to Hong Kong to Rome, Charlie brought back creative and often beautiful prints proving that a neighborhood newspaper from San Francisco can really get around. His early efforts have since been imitated by many, but he still finds the time to send us the occasional foreign snapshot. Above, his English mum takes a break from the rigors of a painting holiday in France by reading the Voice with instructor **Jeremy Lebrice** (right) and a fellow student.



Twenty-fourth Street resident **Michael Beere** visited that "Cradle of Texas Liberty" the Alamo last fall, and sent us this snap from his travelogue.

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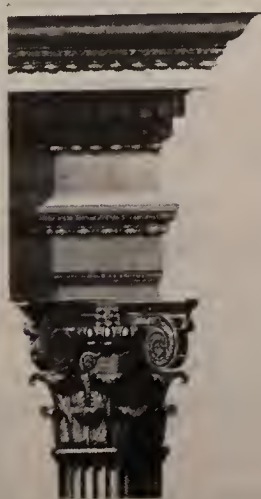
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by Florence Holub

Brief Encounters On the Muni

Since the day my beautiful white 1968 Mustang was stolen 10 years ago, I have been happy with my decision to give up driving. Except for a brief surge of pain every time I see a passing Mustang, I harbor no regrets. In fact, I am almost grateful to the thief when I recall the expenses and demands of driving!

As a driver, I did not enjoy devoting all my senses to coping with the rules and dangers of the road—depriving me of any opportunity to appreciate the passing scenery. And like most San Franciscans, I was frustrated by the constant hunt for a parking space.

Fortunately my man Leo has a car, and we have a one-car garage to put it in. So I have no reason to encumber myself with another gas guzzler, especially when I have good public transportation close at hand.

One morning while I waited for the J-Church streetcar, a young man in a hurry asked me about the J's timetable. We began to chat, and he told me that he worked and lived downtown but did not have a garage for his truck. To solve this problem, he parked the truck in Noe Valley and then came back to move it on street-sweeping days. In my opinion, this is one more example of the aggravations of car ownership—to yourself and to others!

Generally, there is no more than a 15-minute wait for Muni. Even so, people will often strike up a conversation by asking, "Have you been waiting long?"

One afternoon as I approached the bus stop, a lady informed me that we had just missed the 48-Quintara. We passed the time with a pleasant chat, during which she mentioned that she was taking the bus up the hill in order to deliver the *Noe Valley Voice* to a friend. I remarked that I, too, hand-delivered the *Voice*—a dozen or so copies a month—to friends who had responded so favorably that I felt moved to continue my "paper route" indefinitely.

On another day at the same bus stop, a tiny lady sat down next to me and immediately began to stare at my hat. Then she spoke up, saying she would like to find a wool beret just like mine for these cold days. I told her I had bought the hat 20 years earlier, at the long-gone Sears at Geary and Masonic, then added that I wouldn't mind finding another beret myself, before the old one had to be retired. We talked of many things, and before our conversation



ended, I learned that she had been born in Burma! This is one of the joys of Muni—observing the faces and accents of people from faraway places.

Later that day, as I waited for the 24-Divisadero at the corner of Castro and 24th streets, I happened to glance in the window of the corner store. Lo and behold, there stood a mannequin wearing my black beret. I dashed into the store, bought it, and learned that they carried a good stock in a variety of colors. So if my friend from Burma is reading this, take heed—your beret awaits you at Cotton Basics, 1301 Castro St.

Speaking of clothing, one afternoon I observed a young lady on the Castro bus who was attired in a stunning outfit. Over a black turtleneck and slacks she had on an elegant sleeveless jacket made of burnt-orange, long-haired angora. It was so attractive that I did not forget it.

Months later, while shopping at a fabric store, I spotted a bolt of fake orange fur similar to the angora but lacking the refinement. It was coarser, heavier, and, I feared, perhaps a little ridiculous. But I bought two yards anyway! Within a few days I had sewn up a long vest that was practical as well as fashionable—in rainy weather, I felt sure those long synthetic fibers would shed water like a duck's feathers.

The coat has brought me much good-natured attention. Without fail, whenever I wear it, some grinning person calls out "Great coat!" or "Like your coat!" Once I was standing in line at the grocery store when the man in front of me turned around, got a puzzled look on his face, and asked what kind of fur I was wearing. I explained that although it was fake, I would guess it bore a faint resemblance to an orangutan.

...Or perhaps some other beast. One time, a little boy on the J-line—who had been peering out the window, pointing and calling out the names of every bus he saw—took one look at my coat and promptly forgot all about the buses. "Bear!" he cried out, pointing his finger straight at me. As I got off at the next stop, I gave the lad a friendly "Grrrrr!"

The only other mildly impertinent remark was made by an acquaintance

who, upon seeing my coat for the first time, said, "If I had a gun, I'd shoot you!"

I enjoy watching the many ways Muni riders make use of their travel time. Some catch up on their reading, others do the morning paper's crossword puzzle, a few close their eyes—perhaps meditating before embarking upon a hectic day at the office. As you can see, I tend to prefer observing or conversing with fellow passengers.

One morning a pretty young woman came aboard toting a large, cumbersome portfolio, which she slipped into the space between her feet and my seat. I asked her if she was an artist. She replied that she was new to Noe Valley, having come recently from Illinois, and was taking some samples of her work to a job interview at an architect's office. A young man across the aisle overheard us talking and chimed in to say that he also came from Illinois. In no time, the two were comparing notes.

When they got off the bus together, still conversing, I could not help but imagine that this might be the start of a meaningful relationship.

In my Muni travels, I have also come to an important conclusion about teenagers: They are getting worse coverage in the media than they deserve! One recent weekday afternoon, I was sitting in the rear section of the J-car when a bunch of big, noisy high school students poured in at Dolores Park, packing the aisles so solidly that I wondered how I would ever get off at my stop a few blocks away. Hoping for the best, however, I stood up and said, "Pardon me," as we neared my street. Surprisingly, the mass of bodies quietly parted, leaving a space just wide enough for me to pass through.

Another time, when I reached my transfer point at Portola Drive near Tower Market, a group of McAteer High School students was already lined up ahead of me, waiting to board the 48. Glumly, I envisioned having to wait for the next bus while standing in the spot that always gets a full blast of wind from the ocean. But when the bus arrived, I heard a young man yell, "Hey, you guys, make way for the old lady!"

And they did! Everyone stepped aside. They even made sure that I got one of the seats reserved for seniors, near the driver.

People here complain about the bus system. But one has only to live in the suburbs, as Leo and I did for a while in the late '40s, to fully appreciate the efficiency and dependability of the San Francisco Municipal Railway. As the tiny lady from Burma reminded me, "We live in the best place in the world."

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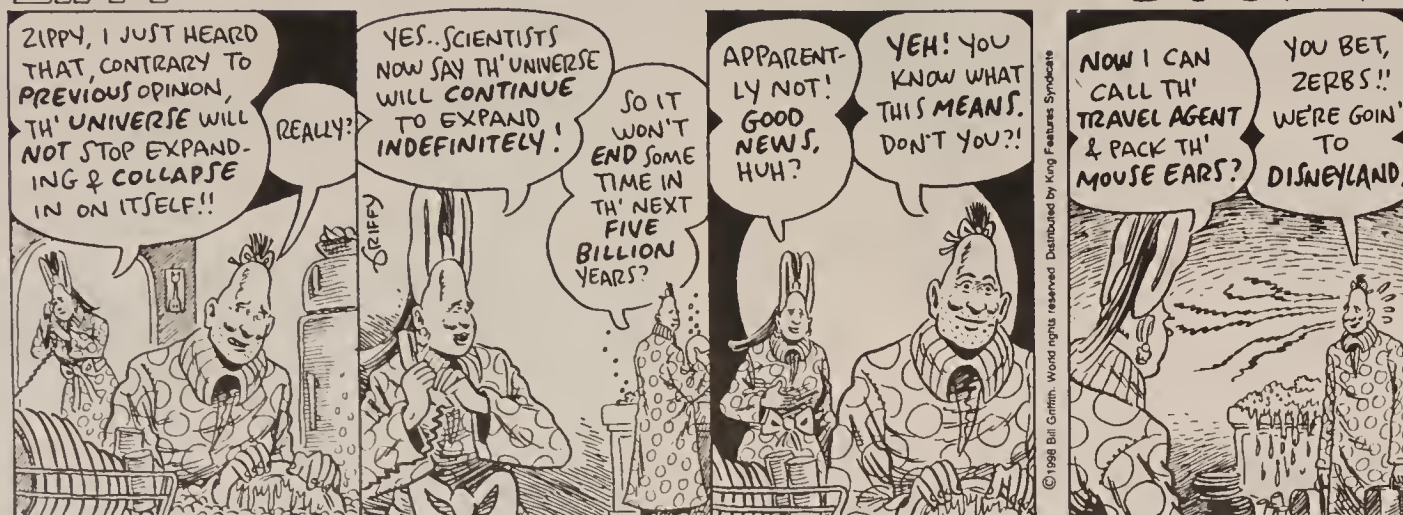
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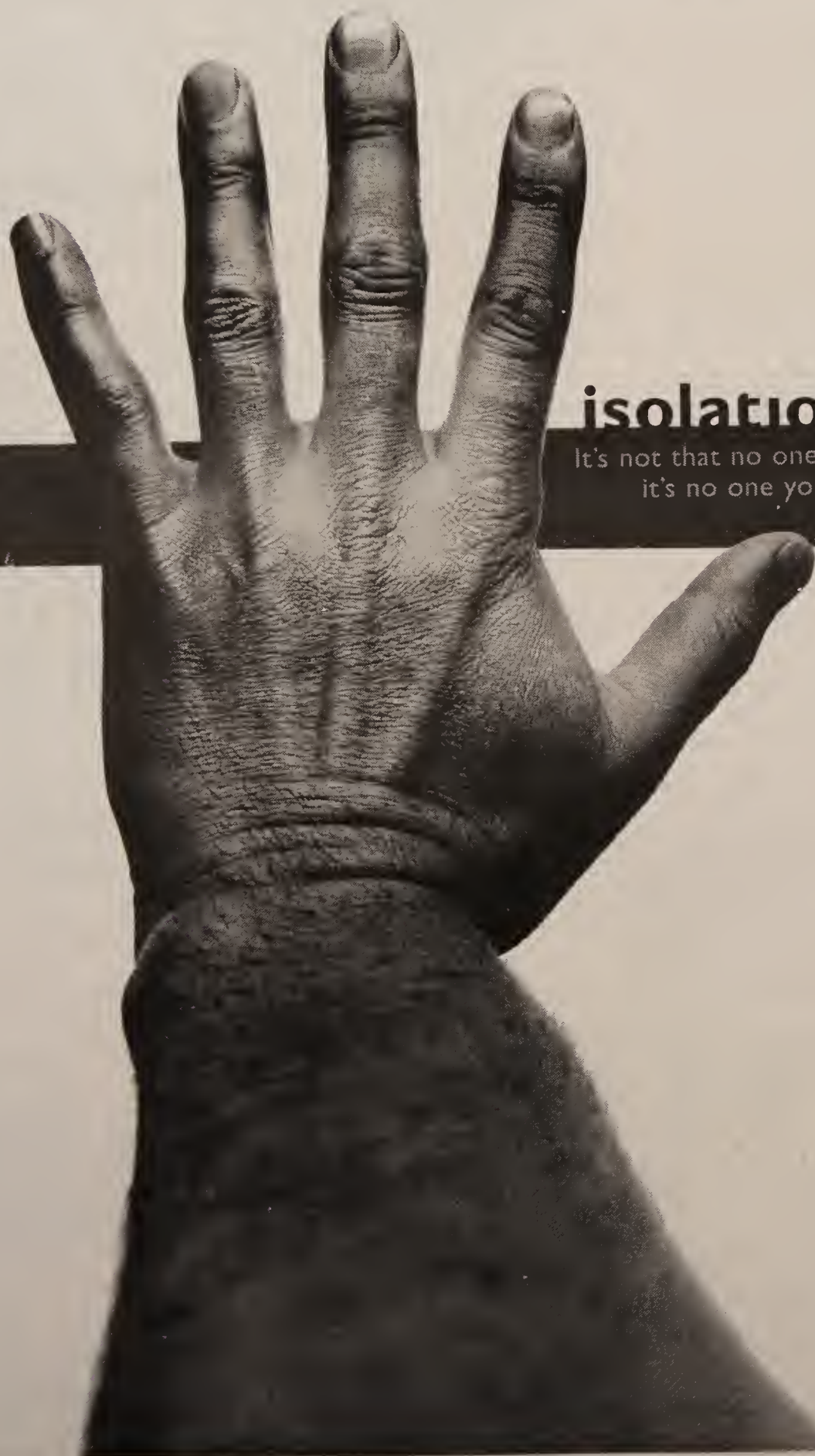
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Librarian Carol Small shows picture books at story time and leads "fingerplay" and nursery rhymes during the lapsits, held weekly at the Jersey Street library. Photo by Pamela Gerard

Kids' Picks

Clap Your Hands For the 'Lapsits'

By Michele Lynn

"The library and lapsits open the doors and windows for children to a lot more than books. Books lead them into the world of the imagination."

So says Rick Holtzer, a big fan of the weekly "lapsits" at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library, located at 451 Jersey St. Holtzer, a Vicksburg Street resident, has been taking his 4-year-old son Shane to lapsits since he was 6 months old.

A score of other neighborhood parents and toddlers join the Holtzers each Wednesday evening from 7 to 7:15 p.m., as children's librarian Carol Small welcomes youngsters to the world of words.

David Ambruster, whose children Forrest, 6, and Claire, 2, are lapsit regulars, says they especially like the routine. "The order is the same every week. Carol always begins with [the song] *If You're Happy and You Know It*." This is followed by more songs, a book, and a lap bounce.

Toddlers perch on chairs or in Mom or Dad's lap, all eyes glued on Small. Okay, not *all* eyes—these are toddlers, after all! But youngsters too curious to sit still are welcome to explore the baskets of books, puzzles, and stuffed animals scattered about the library's children's room. As Ambruster says, "Carol is really sweet and does a great job of making everyone feel comfortable, even while kids are pulling books off the shelves!"

Lapsits are designed for kids 1 to 3 years old, but Small welcomes babes in arms, as well as older children, to the program, now in its 14th year. "Lapsit isn't that much about reading. It's more about enjoying stories in the oral tradition," she says. "It's a helpful beginning for kids to find their way into books and to learn that words can be fun."

For lapsit alumni ages 3 to 5, Small leads a slightly more advanced reading circle—preschool story time—on Tuesday mornings from 10 to 10:20 a.m. She usually chooses three picture books to share with the group. "Preschool story time gives parents and kids a chance to enjoy books together," says Small. "It reinforces the positive values of sharing stories and pictures."

And what better place to share a book than at your cheerful neighborhood library? "It's a really happy place—a great place for kids and parents to be together," says Ambruster. □



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Just My Size. Sixteen-month-old David Hart meets the diminutive Kika (age not given), while out for a walk on 24th Street in February.
Photo by Pamela Gerard

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MORE MOUTHS TO FEED

By Maire Farrington

Emma Rose Larkowich

It's taken no time at all for Emma Rose Larkowich to master the art of making friends. Since her arrival at California Pacific Medical Center at 9:30 p.m. on Sept. 9, 1996—weighing 7 pounds, 4 ounces—Emma has been charming people wherever she goes.

"She's a big flirt really," says her mom, Pat Rose. "Emma loves to go shopping, and when we're waiting in line she'll bat her eyes at whoever's around. If they don't respond, she'll say, 'Hey! Hey!' until they turn to look."

"Shy is not a word I would use to describe her," agrees Dad, Andy Larkowich. Andy notes that when he and Emma pay their after-dinner visit to Spinelli's Coffee, Emma insists on clambering out of her stroller to show off her walking skills. Or she'll wow the crowds with a little jig.

"She does a little dance. She loves the attention," Andy says. But she'll often save an encore for the staff at Holey Bagel (now Manhattan Bagel). Emma also loves to schmooze with the cashiers at Bell Market, says Dad. She's even regaled them with a bunch of fresh flowers.

Andy, 48, a health care consultant, and Pat, 42, a publicist and writer (and *Noe Valley Voice* contributor), were introduced by mutual friends 12 years ago. The two got married in 1989 and bought their home on Clipper Street in 1990.

Since then, they've had plenty of chances to hone their parenting skills. Andy's children from a previous marriage—Jacob, 21, and Victoria, 15—have lived with them on a part-time basis, right from the start.

"When Andy and I met, Jacob was 9 and Victoria was 3," says Pat. "The kids made it easy for me. They were so open." So adding one "more mouth" to the family seemed like a great idea. Emma, with her cheerful nature, easily captured the hearts of her big brother and sister. "They're both very appreciative of Emma," says Andy.

With her blond hair, dark green eyes, and broad smile—which currently reveals 12 teeth—Emma favors Dad's side of the family. In fact, she is almost indistinguishable from a baby picture of big sister Victoria. A seasoned traveler, Emma has already made several trips to visit kinfolk in South Carolina, Rhode Island, Philadelphia, and upstate New York, where brother Jacob is a senior at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.



Sister Victoria (left) and Dad and Mom—Andy Larkowich and Pat Rose—had to go to great lengths to sneak a peek at the bottom of baby Emma's dancing shoes. But it worked. (Next they're going to try to catch a glimpse of those new front teeth.) Photo by Beverly Thorp

Whether she's hanging out in Noe Valley with buddy Kyle McConaughy or off on a jaunt with her play group, Emma has no shortage of pint-sized playmates. Many were on hand to celebrate her first birthday last September at a party in Douglass Park. The weather cooperated while Emma and friends enjoyed lunch and crawled around on a blanket playing with toys, says Pat. "Then right after we sang 'Happy Birthday,' the sky opened up and it just poured rain. We ran under the trees and cut the cake."

When not being a social butterfly, Emma likes to spend time with best friend Lorraine MacDonald, her part-time babysitter who hails from Scotland.

Ever since she uttered her first words at 11 months, Emma has been chatting up a storm. Lately, reports Mom, she's entered the "What's that?" stage. "She has great curiosity. She wants to know what everything is, what everybody's doing, and what exactly is going on around her. She's a very verbal kid."

Favorite words include "'bye-bye,' 'baby,' and 'no!'" laughs Pat. "And 'Elmo' is pretty high on the list," says Andy. Their daughter already knows how to pop her favorite Sesame Street video, *Tickle Me Elmo*, into the VCR, and she operates the remote control like an old pro.

"She also says 'Emma' now," Pat adds. "And she likes to walk up to the mirror and look at herself and point and say, 'That's me!'"

Both Mom and Dad think "Em" came along at just the right time.

"She is really a joy," says Pat. "Being an older mom means that I already have the career stuff out of my system. I feel like I have more time and patience for her. And Emma makes me happier."

Andy also finds that parenting is "a lot more relaxing now. We don't worry as much. I'm sure that's partly why Emma's attitude and temper is the way it is, because our expectations of her are that she just be a happy kid." □

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MORE BOOKS to READ

Where to Go for Women's History

Here is a list of new books, courtesy of Roberta Greifer, Lea Burroughs, Carol Murphy, and Carol Small, your literary guides at the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library. The library is located at 451 Jersey St. between Castro and Diamond. In addition to books—including a special section on women's literature and selections from the new Sally Brunn Collection—the branch has videos, CDs, Internet access, and an index to the *Noe Valley Voice*. Hours are Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Wednesdays, 1 to 9 p.m.; Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Fridays, 1 to 6 p.m.; and Saturdays, noon to 6 p.m. Questions? Call 695-5095.

New Adult Fiction

◆ Gina Berriault, San Francisco's mistress of the short story, won the National Book Critics Circle award for this moving and evocative collection, *Women in their Beds*.

◆ Cinque is the leader of a Mendes slave uprising and John Quincy Adams is his eccentric but brilliant lawyer in *Amistad*, the book tie-in to the recent film.

◆ When Anacrites, chief spy of imperial Rome, is wounded, Marcus Didius Faloo, P.I., goes to work: through the mean streets of Rome and across the Iberian Peninsula, his chase brings matters to a chilling conclusion in Lindsay Davis' latest, *A Dying Light in Corduba*.

◆ In *Lover's Almanac*, Maureen Howard interweaves time and lovers' stories through a narrative of great freshness, illuminating them and her New York landscape in a sweep of ideas.

Annotations by Lea Burroughs

New Adult Nonfiction

◆ *The Lives of the Heart* is local poet Jane Hirshfield's latest collection of poetry.

◆ In *The Measure of Our Days*, author Jerome Groopman, M.D., shares with the reader the lessons he learned from eight patients facing death.

◆ The beautifully illustrated *100 English Roses for the American Garden*, by Clair G. Martin, covers the care, history, and specific characteristics of each rose.

Annotations by Carol Murphy

New Children's Fiction

◆ A beloved pet pig is found to have attained "mom status" in the rhyming story *Louella Mae, She's Run Away!* by Karen Beaumont Alarcon. Ages 2 to 5.

◆ Mariachi musicians, "polle con mole," and the numerous loving relatives all

contribute to the enjoyment of the occasion in Gary Soto's *Snapshots from the Wedding*. Ages 4 to 7.

◆ A resourceful young woman goes way beyond spinning straw into gold, eventually achieving political office, in *Rumpelstiltskin's Daughter* by Diane Stanley. Ages 5 to 8.

◆ Ten-year-old Calvin thinks of himself as "a C kind of guy" until he discovers some of his own talents in *The Magic Squad and the Dog of Great Potential* by Mary Quattlebaum. Ages 8 to 10.

◆ During her eighth-grade year, Alice longs for excitement and has a few surprises in *Outrageously Alice* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Ages 10 and up.

◆ Emily and Jessup have adventures with an invisible imp and the imp's very famous cousin in *The Boggart and the Monster* by Susan Cooper. Ages 10 and up.

New Children's Nonfiction

◆ On their latest unconventional outing, a school class learns science firsthand in *The Magic School Bus and the Electric Field Trip* by Joanna Cole. Ages 6 and up.

◆ Judith Pinkerton Josephson gives us a lively portrait of a union organizer who worked for years to help miners in *Mother Jones: Fierce Fighter for Workers' Rights*. Ages 10 and up.

Movies, Stories, and Lapsits

◆ The library screens *films* for children ages 3 to 5 on Thursday, March 26, at 10 and 11 a.m.

◆ *Preschool story time* for kids 3 to 5 is 10 a.m. on Tuesdays March 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31.

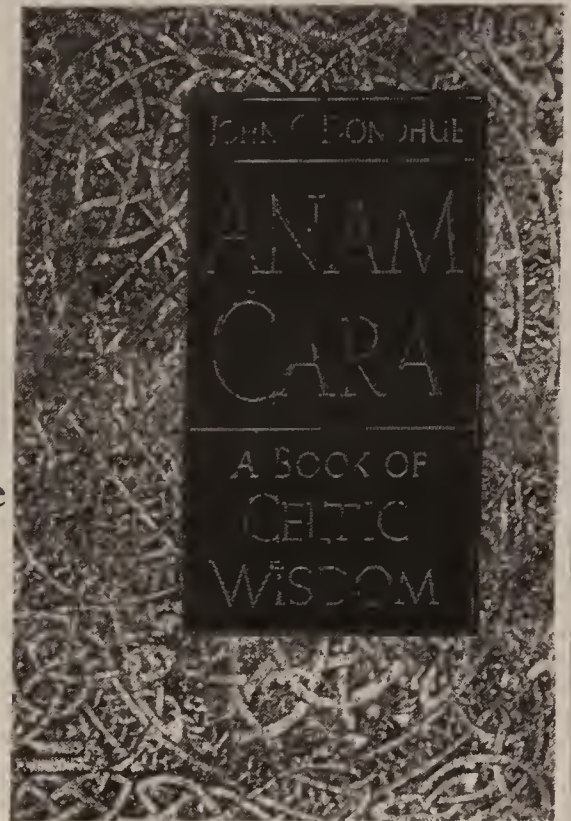
◆ Babies and toddlers and their parents are invited for songs and stories at the Wednesday *lapsits*, 7 p.m., on March 4, 11, 18, and 25.

Children's annotations by Carol Small



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Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, and no more than 1,500 words for The Last Page, 800 for Bylines. Send a copy (not your original manuscript) to the Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Please include an SASE and a phone number. Thank you.

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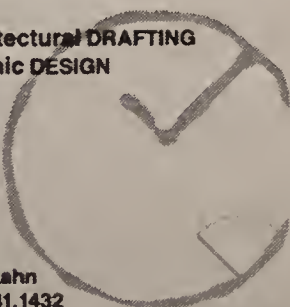


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MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

Amnesty International Group 80

Contact: Lauren Fondahl, 587-7299
Mailing Address: 562 Bright St.,
San Francisco, CA 94132
Meetings: First Thursday of month, Noe
Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 7:30 p.m.

Castro Area Planning + Action

Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230
E-mail: capa@home4us.org
Meetings: Second Thursday of month,
Eureka Valley Recreation Center,
100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Diamond Heights Community Association

Contact: Robert Dockendorff, 826-3867
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: First Thursday of the month,
7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club

Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228
Mailing Address: 3732 21st St.,
San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Bimonthly; membership meetings
semi-annually. Call for details.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contact: Evelyn Martin, 826-6734,
Keith Eickman, 282-8988,
Dennis Downing, 647-0937, or
Deanna Mooney, 821-4045
Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St.,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Held periodically. Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street

Improvement Club
Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753
Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St.,
San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: First Wednesday of month, Noe
Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3428
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137,
San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Third Thursday (except July,
August, and December), Eureka Valley
Rec Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors

Contact: Paul Nixon, 647-5183
Mailing Address: 163 Fair Oaks St.,
San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Call for details.

Fairmount Neighborhood Association

Contact: Susan Nutter, 285-8484
Mailing Address: 78 Harper St.,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Held periodically at Upper Noe
Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 7 p.m.

Friends of Noe Valley

Contact: Harry Stern, 821-1086
Mailing Address: 4250 26th St.,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Second Thursday of month,
Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:45 p.m.

La Leche League of San Francisco

Contact: Susan Condon, 282-7816
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460566,
San Francisco, CA 94146-0566
Meetings: Third Thursday of month, Upper
Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 12:15 p.m.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: Barbara Russell, v.p., 285-4782;
John Barbey, pres., 695-0990;
Mailing Address: 3288 21st St., Box 44,
San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: At least quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Valley Democratic Club

Contact: Dave Monks, 821-4087
Mailing Address: 1652 Dolores St. #6,
San Francisco, CA 94110
Meetings: Second Wednesday of month, Noe
Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 7:30 p.m.

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association

Contact: Robert Roddick, pres., 641-8692
Mailing Address: Robert T. Roddick,
Noe Valley Law Offices, P.O. Box 460574,
San Francisco, CA 94114-6003
Meetings: Last Wednesday of month,
Bank of America, 24th & Castro, 9 a.m.

Noe Valley Senior Center

Call 648-1030 for lunch reservations.
Mailing Address: 1021 Sanchez St.,
San Francisco, CA 94114
Meetings: Lunch, Mon. – Fri. (donation
\$1.50), 12:30 p.m. Discussion, arts and
crafts, Wed. & Fri, 10:30 a.m.
Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
Mailing Address: 294 29th St.,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: First Monday of month,
St. Paul's Church cafeteria, 3 p.m.

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Janice Gendreau, 641-5989
Mailing Address: 403 28th St.,
San Francisco, CA 94131
Meetings: Every other month, Upper Noe
Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. Call for specifics.

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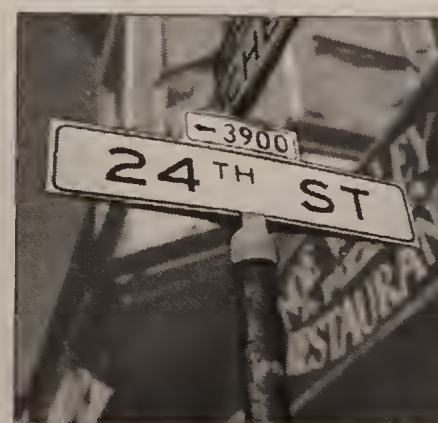


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Sunday Services at the Integral Yoga Institute. The Integral Yoga Institute has Sunday services each week from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We begin with some chanting, then a brief discussion on the spiritual aspects of yoga, a worship service, and conclude with a short meditation. All are welcome. By donation. 770 Dolores St., (415) 821-1117.

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Men: Like to Sing? Try barbershop! Every Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m., Social Hall, Christ Lutheran Church, 20th Avenue and Quintara. For information, call 282-2500.

Gentle Yoga. Simple stretches, yoga postures, deep relaxation, and breathing techniques to gently stretch and strengthen the body. Beginners welcome. No advance registration necessary. Bring a towel, loose clothing, and empty stomach. Saturdays, 9:30 to 11 a.m. \$7 (first visit and seniors, \$4). Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. (415) 821-1117.

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An Introductory Evening for the San Francisco Waldorf Teacher Training Program will be held on Saturday, March 21, 1998 at 7:30 p.m. at the San Francisco Waldorf School, 2938 Washington St. (between Broderick and Divisadero). The training is a three-year program meeting on Friday nights and Saturday mornings at the San Francisco Waldorf School from September through May, and three four-week summer sessions in Santa Cruz. Waldorf education cultivates a wonder for life, enthusiasm for learning, and social and ecological responsibility. Come meet with faculty, alumni, and current students and discover the art of education. For more information, call (415) 331-8879.

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HIV and Yoga. This drop-in hatha yoga class is for those whose lives have been touched with HIV (including family, friends, and caregivers). Beginners welcome. Bring a towel, loose comfortable clothing, and an empty stomach. Mondays, 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$7 (\$4 for first class or needing assistance). Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. (415) 821-1117.

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Women and Relationships Group. Tuesdays, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., April 14 to June 2, Church Street Counseling Center, \$10/week. Explore issues of trust, self-esteem, boundaries and patterns of intimacy with other women in a safe, supportive environment. We'll use writing, drawing, movement, music, and dialogue. Call 648-2644 for information and to reserve a place.

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Leaving in July? Responsible couple in their 50s wants to spend July in Noe near family. Couple seeks comfortable home/flat with parking. Molly, (415) 824-8274.

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Bhagavad Gita. This six-week class studies the ancient Indian spiritual classic, *Bhagavad Gita* (Song of God), with an emphasis on how to apply the spiritual principles into daily life. Required reading: *The Living Gita* (available at the Institute for \$16). Please register in advance. Call (415) 821-1117. Wednesdays, beginning March 16, 6 to 7:30 p.m., \$42. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St.

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Psychotherapy Offices Available, 24th Street San Francisco office, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday. North Berkeley office Tuesday-Thursday. Christa, (510) 528-9867.

Plan Now for a Lovely Spring Garden. Trees, shrubs, hedges. Professional arborist, neighborhood resident. Twenty years experience. Free estimates, reasonable rates. 826-6160; 566-1920. E-mail: Squibben@aol.com.

Mr. Morgenstern Hauls All, reasonable or free in exchange for goods. What have you? 563-5354 or 560-3637.

24th Street Psychotherapy Office available Mondays, part-time Thursdays and Fridays. Sand tray also available. 282-5242.

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Guitar Lessons. Noe Valley, Bernal Heights. Former Pickle Family Circus music director, composer of Academy Award-winning film. B.A. Berklee, 20 years teaching experience. All ages, beginners welcome. Fun, reasonable. Mark, 282-8244.

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Harmonica Lessons. Taught by professional. All styles. Sliding scale. Beginners to advanced welcome. 641-4860.

Pranayama and Meditation. This six-week class presents the basics of meditation and breathing practices. Discover for yourself how these practices can improve the quality of your life, raise your standard of health, and bring new clarity and dynamism to your mind. Please register in advance. Call (415) 821-1117. Mondays, beginning March 16, 7:30 to 9 p.m., \$42. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St.

Free Consultation! Worn out? Sagging? Wrinkled? Try my complimentary, basic easy skin care. Your home or mine. Elsie, (415) 550-7475.

Occasional Work Sought. Semi-retired proofreader (knowledge of French and Spanish); former legal secretary (Word Perfect 5.1); capable, reliable; seeks occasional work (proofreading, clerical, reading aloud, other) to supplement part-time job and small pension. S.F. only. Anne, (415) 522-2980.

Tax Preparation and Consulting. My 10-year-old practice consists largely of self-employed individuals, many of whom are artists or musicians. I also specialize in helping non-filers, audit representation, offers-in-compromise, and prebankruptcy tax planning. Call Alan Steger, E.A., (415) 387-3057.

Furniture Restoration. Complete antique and modern furniture restoration. Careful European craftsmanship. Expert refinishing. Custom upholstery. Caning. Veneering. Quality repairing. Competitive prices. Impressive portfolio and references. Free estimate, pickup, and delivery. Call Boris, (415) 587-3416.

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Looking for a 12-Year-Experienced, reliable, bonded housecleaner? Stop your search! Call KJ now at (415) 285-3014.

Bed and Breakfast in Noe Valley. Parents or friends coming and no room for them? Have them stay in a lovely two-room apartment with private entrance and bathroom, fireplace, kitchen, antique furnishings, private patio. Convenient to 24th Street and J-Church. Oliver House, 695-0700.

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Licensed Painting. Small and large jobs. Interior and exterior. Free consultation and estimate. Also expert plaster and drywall repairs. Cracks and water damage fixed. License 497-214. References. Please call Ed at 995-4666.

Mendocino Weekend Getaway. New, one-bedroom cottage, \$150. Decks, fireplace. Close to village, private. 826-7877.

Building Owners! Thinking about remodeling or adding to your building? Get the expert input your project needs from an experienced architect. Call Mike Hager at 285-7409. In Noe Valley since 1981, 25 years of experience. Reasonable. Free initial consultation.

Buy Direct Breeders. Young and tame parakeets and cockatiels. (650) 697-3682.

Six-Week Hatha Yoga Class. This class will introduce you to basic yoga postures, breathing practices, and deep relaxation techniques. It will allow for personal attention and in-depth instruction. Tuesdays, beginning March 17, 7:30 to 9 p.m. Please register in advance. Call (415) 821-1117. \$42. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St.

Furniture Wanted. I need old dressers, tables, desks, etc. Will repair and/or refinish if necessary. Paying cash. Karen, 647-6157.

Carpentry, Ceramic Tile, drywall, decks, finish carpentry, hardwood floor refinishing, painting. Reasonable prices, good references, free estimates. Call Brad, 627-4065.

Handyman: Repairs, build household and yard projects. References, reasonable rates. Harry Irving, 986-2654.

Walkin Waggin Pet and Plant Care by Carla. Located in Noe Valley. Love and attention, walks, play or sitting. Health care, feeding, and hygiene. Services for all animals (fish and horses too). Responsible, mature, fun, and smart. Animal caretaker/owner with 25 years experience. 648-3651.

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Considering Psychotherapy? A time of difficulty can become a time of growth—if you reach out and use the help and tools that are available. I'm an experienced, licensed therapist who offers a responsive, down-to-earth counseling approach for individuals and couples of all lifestyles. Both short- and long-term counseling are available at my Noe Valley office. Call Judith Rosen, Ph.D., M.F.C.C. (MFCC #18035) at 285-0262.

Yoga in Noe Valley. Classes and private lessons. Also, yoga therapy for whatever ails you! New Dawn Yoga Therapy, (415) 285-1831.

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Living Tai Chi Chuan of Noe Valley. Unique approach for holistic balance. Beginners Tuesday and Thursday, 6 p.m. \$5 introduction. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. Chris Sequeira, 24 years experience. (650) 756-6857, (415) 773-8185.

Piano Lessons in Noe Valley: Learn piano with patient, supportive teacher. Lessons tailored to individual goals. Music degree and 20 years of teaching experience. Ear training, theory, classical, or popular repertoire, MIDI lab. Barbara Barnett, 648-1007.

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Mother/Baby Yoga. This six-week class is for new mothers to come together with their babies and enjoy yoga poses particular to the postpartum needs. Yoga postures, breathing practices, guided relaxation, and group sharing will be experienced. Moms with babies 2 weeks to 8 months are welcome. Pre-registration is required. Please call Madhuri at (415) 821-1117. Wednesdays, beginning March 18, 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$7. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St.

New Improved Noe's Nest Bed and Breakfast. Unit A: private entrance, private bath, kitchenette, queen bed. Cute and cozy. Unit B: view, private bath, deck, fireplace, hot tub, queen bed. Unit C: ultra-view, private bath, steam room, parlor, king bed, fireplace, and deck. All with cable and VCR. Masseuse and day care available. Contact Sheila, 821-0751.

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Vacation Room Rental: Upper Noe Valley—safe, clean, private, comfortable. Ideal for visiting family. 821-4890.

Meditation Workshop. A practical workshop that will enable students to begin earnest meditation on their own. A clear understanding of what meditation is, how it works, and how to make it an enjoyable daily experience will be presented. Tuesday, March 24, 6 to 7:30 p.m. \$7. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. (415) 821-1117.

Gourmet Vegetarian Cuisine delivered to your doorstep. Diverse menus, naturally low in fat, cholesterol, and salt. Treat yourself right! Gift certificates available. For a monthly menu call Jane, 826-2133.

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Non-Toxic Housecleaning. It's healthy, effective, and affordable. I'm thorough, reliable, and honest. Local references. Russell, 431-4975.

Easter Celebration and Potluck at the Integral Yoga Institute. Come celebrate with a service and potluck, as we rejoice in this holy day and its rich message of spiritual freedom and renewal. Please bring a dish with no meat, fish, or eggs. Sunday, April 12, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. By donation. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. (415) 821-1117.

Word Processing (expertise: legal). Tape transcription, editing, mailings, repetitive letters, resumes, letter composition, complaint letters. Phone-in dictation system. Dena Reiner, (415) 821-4661.

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Word Processing: Manuscripts, theses, dissertations, tape transcription, editing. Joanne, 431-0603.

Gardening Service: Includes consultations, design, and renovations. Expert planting, pruning, and maintenance. 626-1258.

Tax Preparation for individuals, financial services for travelers and the distracted. Enrolled Agent licensed to represent clients before the IRS. Reasonable rates. \$10 discount with this ad. 415-695-1819. Gretchen Beck, E.A.

Math Tutoring: (415) 285-1831.

Flute Lessons. Noe Valley-based flutist with B.A. and M.M. in music and pedagogy, accepting students of all ages and levels. Carla, (415) 648-3651.

Books Bought. I come to you. Call L.J., 469-9338 (46-year San Francisco resident).

Yoga and Everyday Life. With Swami Ramananda. This workshop will introduce and explore several methods by which one can steadily develop the capacity to remain centered, focused, and calm in the midst of activity. Obstacles and the means to develop a strong spiritual practice that nurtures our mindfulness during the rest of the day will be presented. Thursday, April 16, 6 to 8 p.m. \$10. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. (415) 821-1117.

Relationship Counseling. Reduce conflicts and improve communication and intimacy with relationship counseling, individuals, couples, and families. Dennis Thatcher, M.S., M.F.C.C. license #MFCC25186. (415) 995-2916.

Vacation Retreat for Noe Valleyans. Calistoga/St. Helena area. Three bedrooms, two baths, sleeps six (maximum); large decks with views of stream/forest; fireplace with wood supplied; 30 acres, trails, all-year stream, koi pond; \$250/two-night weekend, \$275/three-night weekend, \$75/night mid-week with two-night minimum; \$500/week; \$1,500/month. Ten percent discount to all repeat guests. 647-3052.

Depth Psychotherapy. Heal old wounds, past trauma and abuse. Explore and work through stuck places, fears and anxiety that keep you from having the relationships and life that you want. Peggy Handler, MFCC #32077. 695-0166.

Cat & Plant Care is providing TLC to cats and homes in Noe Valley and environs. If you're looking for a reliable individual with local references, call Anna-Kajs (A-K) for a cat chat, etc. 648-8132.

How to Place a Class Ad

It's easy. Just type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by 30¢ a word, and enclose a check or money order for the full amount. Note that phone numbers, including area code, count as one word.

Mail the ad and check, made out to the *Noe Valley Voice*, so that we receive it by the 15th of the month before the month you'd like to advertise in. Even if the ad is a renewal from a prior issue, please send us the full text of your ad.

Discount for Repeat Advertisers: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes a news edition 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the *same* class ad in 10 issues, you are entitled to a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total amount due for 10 issues.

The next *Voice* will be the April 1998 issue, hitting the streets of Noe Valley on Wednesday, April 1. The deadline for Class Ads is **March 15**. The address is **Noe Valley Voice Class Ads, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114**.

Sorry, but we are unable to accept Class Ad orders by phone or e-mail at this time. However, each month's Class Ads are also displayed on our web site: www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Class advertisers should keep in mind that only the first few words of the ad (not to exceed one line of type) will be set in bold. Also, receipts and tear sheets will be provided only if your order is accompanied by an SASE. Thank you. □

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Words Wanted: The *Noe Valley Voice* welcomes submissions of poems, stories, and essays, particularly those with neighborhood themes. Payment upon publication. Send manuscript (typed, please), plus name, address, and phone, to the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114.

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www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Each month the Class Ads and top news stories are posted on our web site for your enjoyment.

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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

How to Be a Beanie Counter

By Mazook

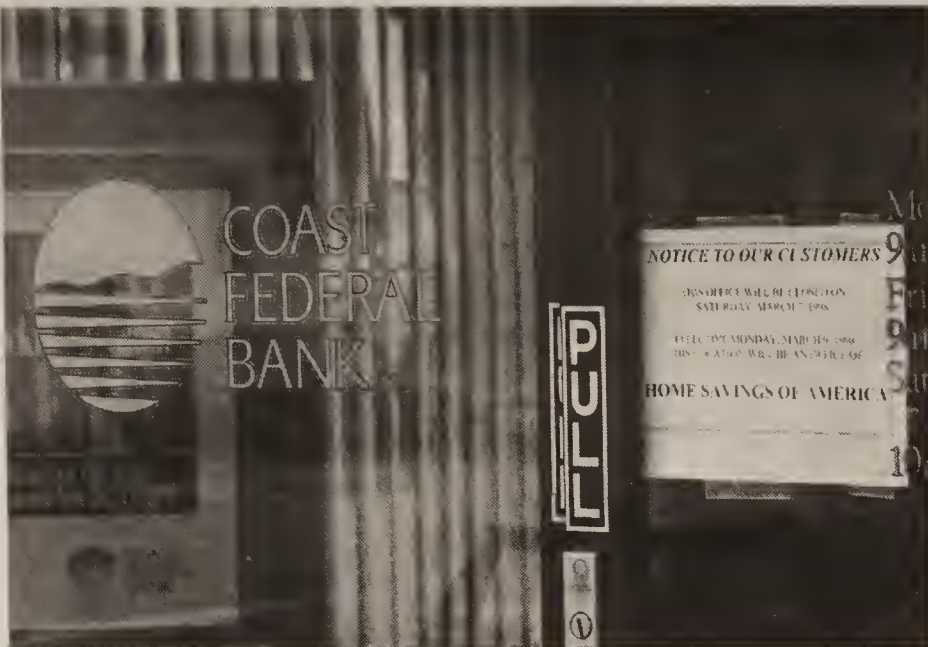
THE BEANIE BABY CRAZE has invaded Noe Valley. And our two main kids' shops, the Ark and Small Frys, are trying hard to keep up with demand.

"It has been unbelievable the last few months," says Pam Byars, of the Ark. "I am selling anywhere from two to six dozen Beanie Babies a day."

Beanie Babies, for those of you who don't know, are cute little stuffed animals (filled with pellets) manufactured by Ty Inc. Each of the cuddly creatures—usually animal characters—comes with a name, a short poem, and a date of birth.

Kids naturally like 'em, but adults are buying the Beanie Babies also—either as collectors' items or to resell at a profit, says Pam. Her Babies go for \$5.95 apiece.

She says she's getting over a dozen calls a day, some from out of state ("we



Is Bigger Better? There were signs of three buyouts on 24th Street last month: Home Savings acquired Coast Federal Bank. The Rite Aid drug chain replaced Thrifty Junior. And Manhattan Bagel formally swallowed up Holey Bagel.

Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

just got a call from Alabama"), to confirm rumors that the Beanies are in stock.

Small Frys owner Carol Yenne has Babies coming out of her ears too. "I've never seen anything like it. We are getting 30 or more calls and selling an average of three or four dozen a day. I just got notice from the manufacturer that we are now an official distributor."

According to Carol, some customers will come in and spend \$200 just on

Beanie Babies. "And we even get offers to buy our entire shipment." She explains that kiosks in the malls are selling the same thing for \$20, so many people try to buy and resell them. "The big collectors who come into our store," says Carol, "are mostly middle-aged men!"

Small Frys even has a phone list to notify customers when a new shipment arrives. Carol says the shipments, which have 600 to 700 Babies, come once a month.

The hottest Beanie Baby these days is a bear named for Princess Diana. Carol reports that this Baby fetches up to \$600, so Small Frys is holding a raffle for their last Princess Di Bear in stock. Tickets are \$2 and all proceeds go to Catholic Charities.

Another hot tip on the Beanie Baby Watch: There is currently a new Beanie Baby out that everyone is asking for. It's called "Erin," and it has a big shamrock on its front to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.

☎ ☎ ☎

CALVACADE OF CAFES: The year-and-a-half-old Courtyard Cafe (it was Rami's Caffé before that) on Church Street near Clipper is now history. In its place, owner Abed Amas is going to unveil an eatery serving authentic, traditional Middle Eastern cuisine.

Abed has hired a world-class chef from Jordan, Manal Shafi, who will create salads, stews, and shishkebabs for lunch and dinner. "We will still have Saturday and Sunday brunch," says Abed, who comes here (ironically as did Rami) from Jerusalem.

The place will be named Fattoush, which is also a Lebanese salad. Fattoush is currently being remodeled and should be completed, according to Abed, by the end of March. The new interior is being designed by Jacquelyn Nelson, who recently designed Savor on 24th Street.

Oh, by the way, the courtyard in the back of the restaurant is being preserved, and heaters are being promised.



Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

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Member:

While we're on the food front, I do have a couple of short-order items.

First, Happy Donuts at 24th and Church is now applying for a "conditional use permit" from City Planning so that it can reopen from 2 to 6 a.m., prime time in the donut and coffee world. You all remember that last year the police slapped a cease-and-desist on Happy Donuts until the shop acquired a "cabaret license" allowing it to stay open 24 hours (as it had done *without* the license for the past 20 years). The hearing on the new permit is scheduled for March 5. Insomniacs, unite!

Then there is the new product at Bell Market: ostrich meat. Bell was offering free samples in its meat department at the end of January.

In touting the ostrich, Bell claims that it is 97 percent fat-free, has even less fat than turkey, beef, or chicken, and "tastes similar to beef and is a red meat."

When I last checked, the store butcher told me sales had been quite brisk and had been increasing over the past month.

According to Bell, these ostriches are raised at Silver Oaks Ranch in Morgan Hill, Calif., "in a free-range environment."

☎ ☎ ☎

LOCAL TAX EXPERT Jan Zobel has just released the second edition of her book *Minding Her Own Business: The Self-Employed Woman's Guide to Taxes and Recordkeeping*.

"This book," says Jan, "is designed especially for the woman entrepreneur. Many women say 'I've never understood this [tax] stuff and my husband or my father has always dealt with tax and money issues, so I don't understand any of it.'"

"They have numberphobia," she adds. She claims her book provides good remedy. You can check it out at Cover to Cover or other bookstores in the neighborhood. It costs \$16.95 and is published by East Hill Press in Oakland. By the way, the first edition of the book, published in early '97, sold a respectable 4,000 copies.

Jan has had her office in the neighborhood (23rd and Valencia) and has taught seminars for self-employed people for close to 20 years. About a quarter of her 400 clients are in the 94114, 94110, and 94131 zip codes—greater Noe Valley.

If anyone would know the extent of our numberphobia, it'd be Jan.

☎ ☎ ☎

CONGRATS and good luck to Noe Valley's Michael Garavaglia, who just became president of the North Beach Chamber of Commerce. He has his own architecture firm, which specializes in historic preservation, downtown revitalization, and many other types of commercial and residential projects.

"I moved to Noe Valley [Sanchez Street] three years ago from Telegraph

Continued on Next Page

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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Continued from Previous Page

Hill, where I'd lived for a long time. I also had my office in North Beach until I recently moved downtown," says Mike.

Mike and his wife Sheila are very active in the California Preservation Foundation and have just moved into a home at 27th and Noe streets that is 90 years old. They are now planning their own restoration project.

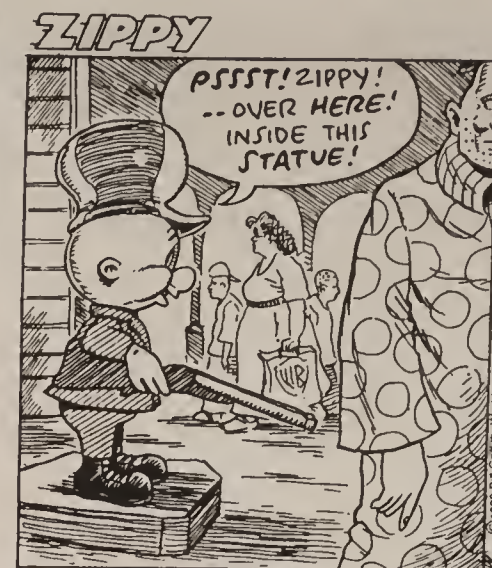
Best wishes go out to Catalina Roja, who celebrated her 100th birthday on Feb. 11 at the 30th Street Senior Center. It was a gala event.



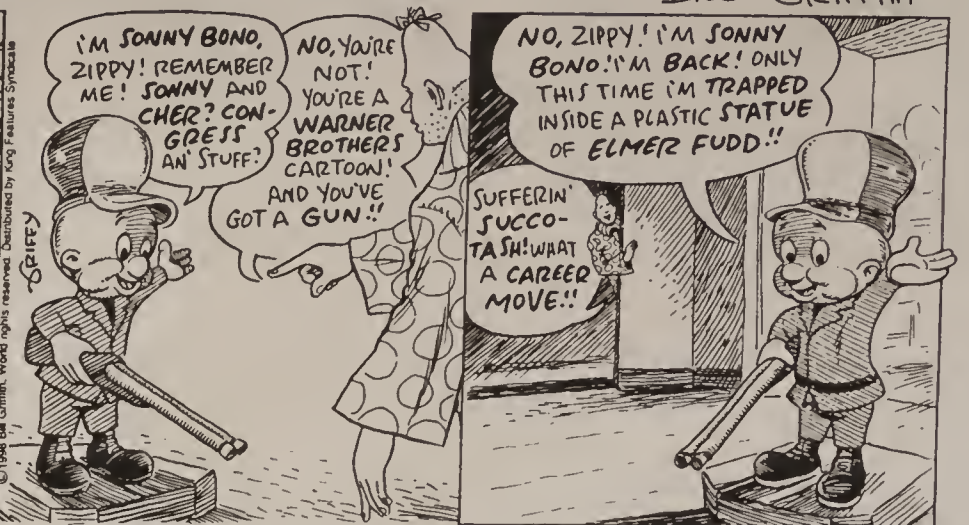
TOP OF THE POPS: Patrick Morehead at Streetlight Records reports that the number-one CD out the door these days is *Buena Vista Social Club* by Ry Cooder. Cooder recorded the album in Havana, Cuba, and I'm told the jam sessions were hot, hot, hot.

Aquarius Records says its best seller is the new release by the group Neutral Milk Hotel, *In the Aeroplane Over the Sea*.

Over at Phoenix Books and Records, which specializes in blues and jazz music, the number-one request is anything by



"AT THE MALL"



Tom Waits. Hey, let's get Waits to come play the Noe Valley Music Series.

The top fiction work at Phoenix and also at Cover to Cover is the Toni Morrison novel *Paradise*. In the non-fiction category, both Cover to Cover and Phoenix report that your favorite is *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt. McCourt's book tells the story of his growing up Irish-Catholic in New York and then moving to Ireland.

Video Wave, West Coast Video, and Blockbuster all agree that the Al Pacino flick *Devil's Advocate* is being requested more than any other video on the racks.



TWENTY-FOURTH STREET BEAT: Somehow it seems sad that the Thrifty Junior drugstore now has a big neon sign saying it is Rite-Aid. But what's in a name? Rite-Aid is a 4,000-store national chain and boasts of low-cost prescriptions.

Also, Coast Savings will be no more by the end of March. Home Savings of America took it over last month, and will light up its own sign soon on the corner of 24th and Noe.

No word yet on what will happen to the

Coast crew. Hopefully the only thing that will change here is the name.

Ecollectic is calling it quits in the Noe Valley Mall after a brief run (since mid-'97). Maybe the name didn't catch on.

Sorry to see Star Magic fold, but the shop hadn't been the same for the past few years. I remember back in '78 when it opened as Gifts of the Magi. The painted floors, sparkling jewels, and New Age music were pretty cosmic.

The rumor is that Elisa Ining will be expanding her health spa into Star Magic's old storefront—good news to a lot of local bath and massage patrons.



UPDATING THE UPDATES: Crews from the general contractor Merlot & Company are about to restore the sidewalk on the west side of Sanchez Street south from the corner of 21st.

"The project will restore the forty-five squares of sidewalk to their original vintage San Francisco form," says Janice Bracken, who is helping to organize a small memorial for her mother, Dolores Heights activist Audrey Rodgers.

Rumors regulars will recall that a truce

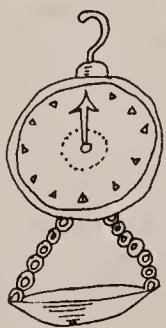
had finally been reached over the memorial, among the neighbors on "Battle Mountain." Everyone agreed that a small bench would go in on a landscaped spot in the 31-foot-wide "undeveloped sidewalk" near the corner.

Well, according to Janice, the developer of four nearby luxury houses, Seamus McGee, has agreed to pay half of the \$3,400 cost of the sidewalk restoration. The neighborhood's memorial fund will pay the other half.

The bench will then be installed, a tree will be planted in memory of *Voice* writer Florence Holub's son, and "a New Zealand tea tree will be planted in memory of my mom," says Janice.

Before I go, I want to send condolences to all the family and friends of Elizabeth Rusk, who died on Valentine's Day at 90 years young. She was a longtime member of the Noe Valley Ministry community, and had belonged to the church back in the old days when it was still the Lebanon Presbyterian Church. She was an inspiration to everyone around her. Look to the *Voice* next month for a story about her life and times.

Ciao for now.



Voice Mail

THE VOICE welcomes letters to the editor. Write the Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Or send e-mail to jaxvoice@aol.com. Please include your name, address, and phone number, so we can contact you if we have questions. Another way to reach us is via our Web site: www.noevalleyvoice.com. There you'll find a history of the paper, the Class Ad listings, and select stories from current and past issues. Hope to hear from you soon.

If this sounds like you, don't ignore it. Because your doctor can help.

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- ☐ Feelings of sadness or irritability
- ☐ Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- ☐ Changes in weight or appetite
- ☐ Changes in sleeping pattern
- ☐ Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless
- ☐ Inability to concentrate, remember things or make decisions
- ☐ Fatigue or loss of energy
- ☐ Restlessness or decreased activity
- ☐ Complaints of physical aches and pains for which no medical explanation can be found
- ☐ Thoughts of death or suicide

Day of the Dead

By Denise Minor

NOT A BEAUTIFUL BEACH BY any means. But on a day like today, with the sun so sweet and warm, it is a pleasant place to be. Underneath my sandals, fragments of sand dollars snap into even smaller fragments. The tide has left bits of kelp sprawled helpless on the wet sand.

Aunt Emilia sits on a wobbly kitchen chair with a glass of burgundy placed on the table in front of her. A white scarf is draped around her face with one end slipped over her shoulder. She is wearing oval sunglasses that I've never seen before. I wonder, Do the dead try new fashions?

I approach quickly and she smiles. Her white skin folds in soft wrinkles, chalky with powder. The red lipstick is spread perfectly, unlike the uneven smears she used to put on during the last years of her life. This is how she wanted to look.

I sit next to her on the sand and look up.

Aunt Emilia was the woman in the basement bedroom, Grandma's never-married sister who lived with us from the time I was 2. Hours, I spent, digging in the garden with her. Clipping and unclipping beaded, shiny earrings on her earring tray. Gawking at the voluptuous women on the covers of her paperbacks. Perching next to her on the couch and typing on her 40-year-old manual while she smoked and watched soap operas.

Hours, she spent, listening to my imagination.

Then, when I turned 11, our adventures began. The first was a night train to Salt Lake City. She rented a berth with a double bed, but I was too thrilled to sleep.

Aunt Emilia sips her wine and smiles. "Remember the boat to Victoria Island?" she asks.

It's the first time I've heard her voice in five years.

"You were so seasick," she says.

I nod. "And on top of it I had my period so bad it made me cry. You brought me hot-water bottles all day and told me that, in spite of the pain, it was still good to be female."

She pats my cheek as she always did and looks at the misty waves crashing yards away.

The question catches in my throat, but I push it out.

"Why didn't you wait?"

She says nothing, but shakes her head back and forth. Her hand is still on my cheek.

"I had tickets to be home in just two more weeks. Couldn't you have held out?"

"The pain was everything, my dear," she replies.

"But I wanted to say goodbye."

She smiles and shakes her head. "There was no need."

"Yes, there was. For me there was."

She takes my hand in her bony fingers and chews on her lip, the way she did every time I left. Behind the dark glasses I am sure her eyes are wet.

THE LAST PAGE

"All right, dear. You can say it now."

I get up on my knees, move closer, and put my arms around her.

"Goodbye," I whisper next to her cheek. My heart is pounding hard, banging inside my ribs against hers. But Aunt Emilia's chest is silent.

I stand up quickly, afraid to think about this, and turn to walk away. The sun is higher and hotter. The tide has receded, and small crab breathing holes have appeared on the wet beach. Tiny jellyfish lie about glittering and abandoned.

Sandpipers are playing tag with the waves while overhead seagulls caw mournfully.

didn't make sense in our town. Remember how Cookie Rourke shot herself at the age of 16 just because she didn't get her letter in track? Remember Kathy Frances who fell off the boat while her husband was driving it?"

I back up and trip a little.

She stands and takes a deep breath. I can tell she doesn't want me to leave.

"Please, Denise, remember these things," says Mrs. Fredricks, now in an even tone.

I nod to show I'm listening.

"If the explanation doesn't sound right, it isn't," she says, then sits down and looks sadly at the hand holding her cigarette.

It's late afternoon now. The sun is shining in my eyes, so I cock my head to the side as I walk. Beneath my feet, blackened bits of bonfire wood and charcoal snap. I step over a burnt log and spot him further up the beach sitting in a La-Z-Boy recliner.

"Daddy?" I ask when I'm close enough. My heart is pounding.

He looks up over bifocals from a crossword puzzle.

"What's a four-letter word for 'dispossession'?" he asks.

"I don't know," I reply, heartbroken that I can't answer the only question my father has ever asked me. He just nods and looks back at the puzzle.

"Dad," I say, stepping closer, "why didn't you stay alive?"

His eyebrows lift and seem to pick up his whole head. He takes a moment to



Photo by Pamela Gerard

Elaine Fredricks is sitting on the black office chair she always used at her work table. It has wheels and grows taller or shorter, depending on which way you spin it.

She is furiously smoking a cigarette.

"What are you doing here?" I ask.

She snaps her head in my direction. "I am waiting for someone to listen to the truth."

Mrs. Fredricks lived down the street from us and was my best friend's mother. I always said that the thing I liked about her was that she was the only mom on the block who would swear in front of us.

"Pompous ass," she sneered one day as her friend's husband walked out the front door. We snickered and repeated "pompous ass" for hours.

But that wasn't really it. The thing I liked best about her was something I found hard to name. It was the thing she held inside, only to let out in bursts of cigarette smoke or wicked laughter.

"You cried at the funeral," she says, softer now. "Even more than my son."

"I liked you," I say. "I liked to be in your house."

Her creations filled her home — curtains, birdhouses, doll houses, doll clothes, people clothes, Christmas decorations, and cornucopias. Lonnie called her mom a domestic artist. But I was certain she wanted to be more than that.

In my senior year at the university, I came home at spring break to learn that Mrs. Fredricks was found dead, for no reason the coroner could determine, at her cabin at the reservoir. She was there alone to get some reading done. Or so the story went.

"Couldn't happen today," she says, getting angry again. "But everyone used to be so damned polite. They wouldn't ask anything upsetting to the grieving family."

"Were you murdered?" I ask.

Mrs. Fredricks only chuckles and taps her ashes on the chair.

"I will say this," she lowers her voice and exhales a rigid stream of smoke. "If the explanation doesn't sound right, it's because something isn't right."

"Think back," she whispers now. "Think of all the deaths you knew of that

"And never, ever stay with a man who doesn't love you."

I walk over and awkwardly touch her shoulder. Funny, I think, I never touched her when she was alive.

"Thank you," I say, then turn and walk up the slope, past a bloated disposable diaper and onto a dry flat place. The wind has picked up and is tossing stinging sand at my ankles.

♦ ♦ ♦

A young man is squatting on an upside-down crate twisting pliers on the engine of a racing motorcycle.

I draw closer and see with a quickening heart that this is a face I would have known well. He has his father's red hair and my dark eyes, and he would be about 19.

He looks up coldly from his work.

"Why didn't you let me live?" he asks.

"I... I... was too young," I answer, then pause. "I'm sorry but I had to be selfish. I was afraid that the life I pictured for myself would disappear forever."

He looks back at the engine and continues to unscrew something. "I was going to be the best dirt bike racer that ever came out of Idaho. At races, older guys would snicker when they saw me walk up to my bike, just 12 or 13 years old. But they wouldn't be laughing when I crossed the finish line ahead of them."

I nod, not sure how to feel about this talent.

"I would have been very easygoing. I would have been a teenager that never hated you," he says. "Almost never."

I gasp, knowing full well the importance of this, as I picture my two small hotheaded boys at home.

"I have two kids now," I say hopefully. "They wouldn't exist if you'd been born."

He shakes his head and exhales with a "tut" sound, a strange mannerism his father used to have. "That doesn't matter to me."

No, of course it doesn't.

"I'm sorry," I whisper as I walk backwards, already in love with my grown-up son who never lived, then turn and head up the beach.

focus on me, a moment to shake his mind from the page.

"I hear of it all the time," I say. "People are on death's door, or dead even, and they see white light and angels, and they decide to come back to the world. Why didn't you do that — for me and for Mom?"

"Oh, Denise," he says, shaking his head and putting his puzzle down. Just the way he says my name, with love and impatience, the way no one has ever said it, makes me start to cry.

"Yes, those things happen. But almost never."

"But you could have done it," I say. "You could have mustered all your strength and pulled yourself back into your damaged head. You should have done it. I would have been so much happier."

"You don't know that," he says softly.

But I do know that. I've known that since I was small — maybe 5 years old — and found a black-and-white photo of a dark-haired man with his arm draped casually across Mother's shoulders.

"Your daddy," Aunt Emilia had told me hoarsely, after taking a deep breath and laying aside the snapshot I had brought to her bedroom. "He passed away when you were 2."

Oh yes, I remember thinking. Those big hands that picked me up easily. That voice and scratchy face. And in the next moment I realized that we didn't have a man in our house, and that all my friends did.

"You should NOT have died!" I say loudly and with more certainty than I've said anything in my life. But my father can't hear me. He is scratching small letters into the book on his lap.

I turn away and run in the other direction, past the burnt log and toward the setting sun. Waves are picking up and sucking away the sand dollars and diapers, the charcoal and kelp. Everyone is gone except the brazen seagulls and the skittery sandpipers.

♦ ♦ ♦

Denise Minor is a Spanish teacher, writer, and, with her husband Alex Milgram, a parent of two preschool boys. She has been a contributor to the Noe Valley Voice for more than 13 years.

Writers

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